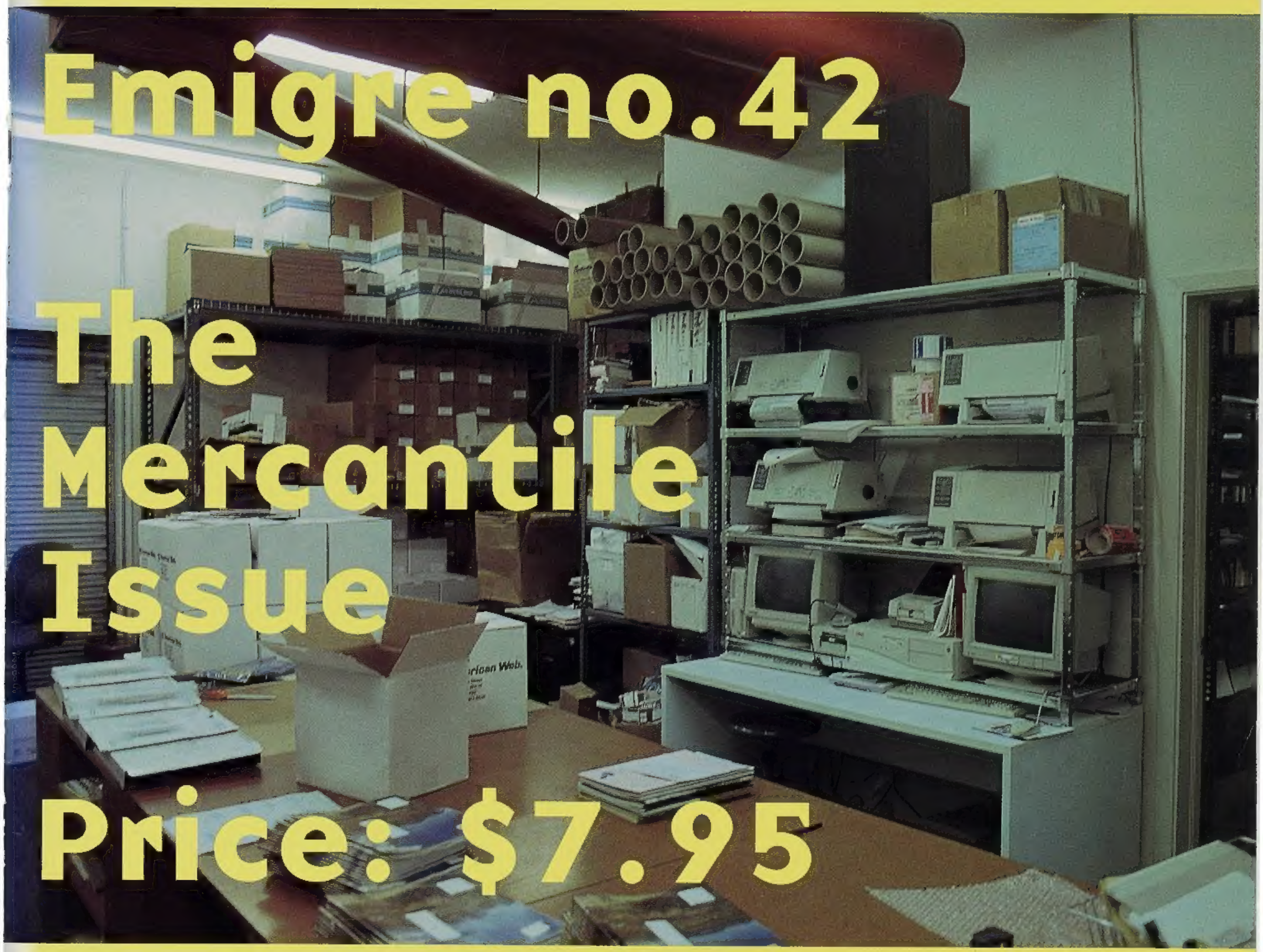
Emigre no.42

The Mercantile Issue

Price: $7.95



Spacing

Framing





Punctuation...

This spread from the forthcoming book: ***More Principles of Typography*** by Emigre. Due out Spring 2000.

Introduction

When you publish a magazine and wish to keep it profitable, there are really only a couple of ways to go about it: you can let the readers pay all the publishing costs, or you can sell advertising. With Emigre, we've tried the first scenario for some twelve years and 41 issues, and while the magazine was always able to support itself through subscription, back issue, and newsstand sales, there has been a definite limit to the size of our audience.

Without advertising income, the cover price of Emigre became slightly higher than we liked it to be, making it too expensive for many of our intended readers. Also, since we could not afford to destroy any copies, newsstand sales were restricted to those stores willing to abide by our "no returns" policy. In short, Emigre was never able to expand beyond the most dedicated readers and resellers, to whom we owe our existence.

There is a romanticism to small scale publishing. First, it allows for creating work without much compromise or concern for being misunderstood – it facilitates risk taking and experimentation. And, second, by publishing material of a more open-ended nature, a dialog with the audience is easily generated. While there are numerous other factors, both logistical and practical, that make small scale publishing enjoyable, we never stopped wondering about the potential size of Emigre's audience. Would more people buy the magazine if it were cheaper? Would our circulation increase if we gave our resellers better terms? Or was our small but dedicated readership simply the result of the magazine's esoteric nature? Perhaps, but if our "pass-along" readership is any indication, the number of people seemingly interested in what we publish far exceeds the number of copies we sell.

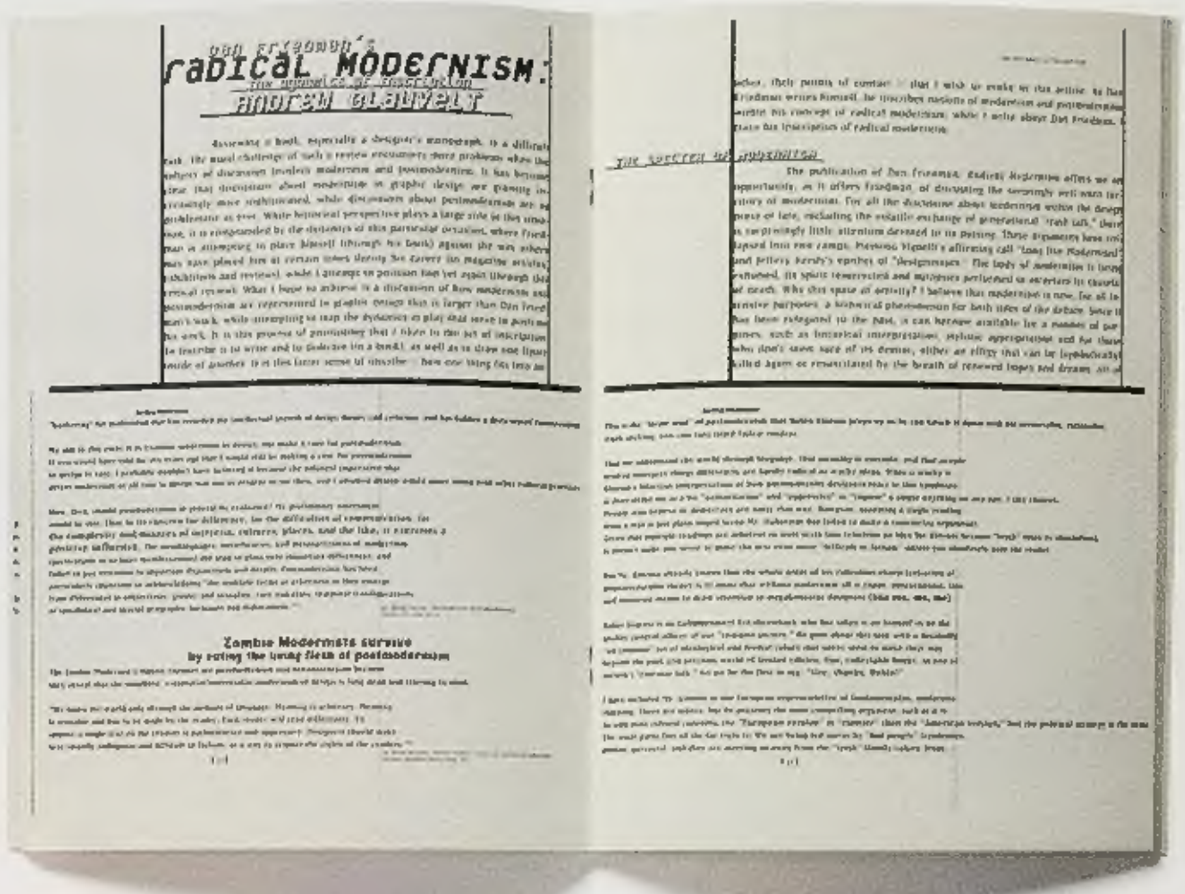
Since publishing literally means "to make public," we wondered if our method of publishing was simply defeating its own purpose. With this issue, we hope to challenge that idea by introducing two significant changes. First, we have opened the magazine to advertisers and have increased the presence of our own products. And second, we have made the magazine free to anybody who has requested to be on the Emigre mailing list.*

Editorially, little will change. We will continue to focus on graphic design from a variety of angles, cover issues not quite covered by the other design magazines, and be a bit more in depth than most. And we will continue to stress the magazine's content, as well as explore its possibilities as a graphic object. As a new and recurring feature, we will also showcase some of the rather unusual and/or surprising uses of Emigre Fonts that we have collected over the years. Bringing our fonts to the forefront this way seemed only reasonable. After all, it is the Emigre Fonts library that stands at the very center of our business.

Since Emigre is both an artistic and economic endeavor, we enjoy finding the balance between doing work that is meaningful and creating viable commercial products that generate income. It is at this intersection of art and commerce where graphic design resides, and this makes working in design so appealing to us. It is an environment that is constantly changing – a fact that inspires us to often reinvent ourselves. We hope that you will enjoy our latest metamorphosis. RVDL

* To qualify for a free 4-issue subscription, please fill out the reply form on the outside wrapper and return to Emigre by June 30, 1997. If your magazine has no reply form, go to **www.emigre.com/freemag.html** (Offer good within the U.S. only.)

Below: Two spreads from previous issues; *Emigre* no.34, the "Rebirth of Design" issue, published in 1995; *Emigre* no.37, the "Joint Venture" issue, published in 1996 (Fold-out spread designed by Stephen Farrell). Both issues, along with most other *Emigre* back issues are still available at the regular price of $7.95. For ordering information and availability see catalog in center of this magazine.



Rudy VanderLans
PUBLISHER/DESIGNER

Zuzana Licko
EMIGRE FONTS

Cathy Lang Ho
COPY EDITOR

Tim Starback
MANAGER

John Todd & Ella Cross
SALES/DISTRIBUTION

THANK YOUS: CHUCK BYRNE, BOB DAHLQUIST, JOHN DOWNER, VOJTECH LICKO, RICHARD MOORE, AND CLAUDIO PICCININI.

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Emigre no. 42 | THE MERCANTILE ISSUE
SPRING 1997

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Design(er) Type

or

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS WHO DESIGN TYPEFACES

(And the typographers who forgive them)

by Mr. Keedy

This essay was based on lectures presented at the ATypI conference in The Hague, October 26, 1996, and at the symposium "Mixing Messages, Graphic Design in Contemporary Culture," which was held in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name at the National Design Museum, New York, November 9, 1996.

Typefaces created by graphic designers are revealing because they represent the designer's ideas in the least ephemeral and most influential form of graphic design. The type designer's signature is inscribed in forms that can live forever, inspiring many generations to come or simply disappear without a trace. The intensive and complex nature of typeface design makes it an ideal site for discovering graphic designer's interests and aspirations. Because the type designer's ideas and emotions must be perfected to a narrowly proscribed range of possibilities, typefaces can be "read" as an abridged manifesto of their creators' personal ideology and style.

The formal and functional biases of graphic designers are markedly different from those of the specialized type designer. Typically, full-time type designers concentrate on pragmatic and technological issues while graphic designers are mostly concerned with style and expression. As we enter an era when more graphic designers than ever are contributing to the inventory, history, and evolution of typefaces, it is a good time to pause and think about the impact it will have and, more importantly, what the goals should be.

As a contribution to that investigation, I have briefly outlined a survey of graphic designers who have designed typefaces that begins with the present and goes back to the "first" graphic designer. The criteria I used to select them was that they were primarily recognized for their graphic design, which constituted the majority of their work, and that they expressed their particular design sensibility in typefaces that are available to the public. My primary concern is not so much what was done when and by whom, but what are the broader implications. To that end, I am attempting to address what graphic designers are actually communicating to the rest of the world through those ubiquitous and subtle intermediaries of communication, known as typefaces. I realize that decoding the meaning embedded in letterforms requires a degree of literacy and critical distance which I lack, so I offer these observations not as a disinterested critic, but as a subjective participant. This is not ***our*** past; it's ***my*** present.

Continued on next page

Diversity or Chaos in the 90s

Although we still don't know everything the 90s will bring, the "anything goes," end-of-history atmosphere will no doubt generate a lot of interesting directions for the new millennium. Certainly the emergence of the Internet and small independent type foundries are indicators of things to come. Home-grown type foundries sprouted up at an accelerated rate over the last decade, creating a daunting task for the average consumer who must now wade through a smorgasbord of type producers. It remains to be seen whether enough consumers will make it worthwhile for these independent producers. But this might not matter as most of the small foundries are doing it for love and not money.

House Industries, Thirstype, Virus, Fuse, The Apollo Project, Garage Fonts, and T-26, are typical of graphic designer foundry names. They are an extension of the hip-sounding design studio names that started in the early 80s. The point is, unlike So-and-So Design, or Somebody-or-Other Type Company, they place a higher premium on creativity than accessibility or utility.

Most of the smaller design studios and type companies present themselves as specialized boutiques, but not to the point of sacrificing an overall generic appeal. They establish a unique identity that is singular and easily recognizable, so their clients' appetite for the new will be appeased with a more reliable provision of novelty.

Typefaces are, in a sense, never completely new or original as they are all based on past models, or as Frederick Goudy put it, "all the old fellows stole our best ideas." Nevertheless, the modernist avant-garde quest for originality and the consumerist ethos of planned obsolescence demand something new – or at the very least something that can be ***sold*** as new. The exigency for the new is prompted by the apparent exhaustion of all current and historical models; at this point it seems that everything has been worked and reworked to death. That is why originality is now evaluated on the basis of the relative obscurity of one's sources as opposed to the uniqueness of their interpretation. The search for new sources has compelled intrepid hunters to look much closer to home, scavenging through yesterday's trash, because in their cursory view, it's the only thing that hasn't been thoroughly picked over and it still smells "fresh."

One of the more compelling type companies to traffic in yesterday's dreams is House Industries, started by Brand Design in 1994. House Industries seem to be primarily in the business of recycling and reselling low-culture style from the past to today's graphic designers who can in turn create the mass-mid-culture style of the present. House Industries is a typographic supply house for ad agencies that peddle essential commodities to baby boomers by reassuring them that their adolescence is worth celebrating. Not too long ago, if "professional" designers (i.e. those armed with a college degree), were promoting and emulating the likes of Ed "Big Daddy" Roth and his Rat Fink Fonts, it would have been dismissed as silly or sophomoric – not subversive and inclusive. Although graphic designers have always indulged their clients with nostalgia and the vernacular, since the 80s the appropriation of the past has devolved into an ingratiatingly complicit gimmick of reinventing the past as a naive precursor to our supposedly sophisticated present. Consequently, by the 90s the designer's objective was no longer to challenge and inspire, or even to impress and intimidate, but to console and amuse. In response to a social climate that encourages cultural egalitarianism, today's graphic designers have elevated ordinary bad taste with as much passion, not to mention better tools, as the previous generation had in establishing an elitist canon of professional excellence or "good design."

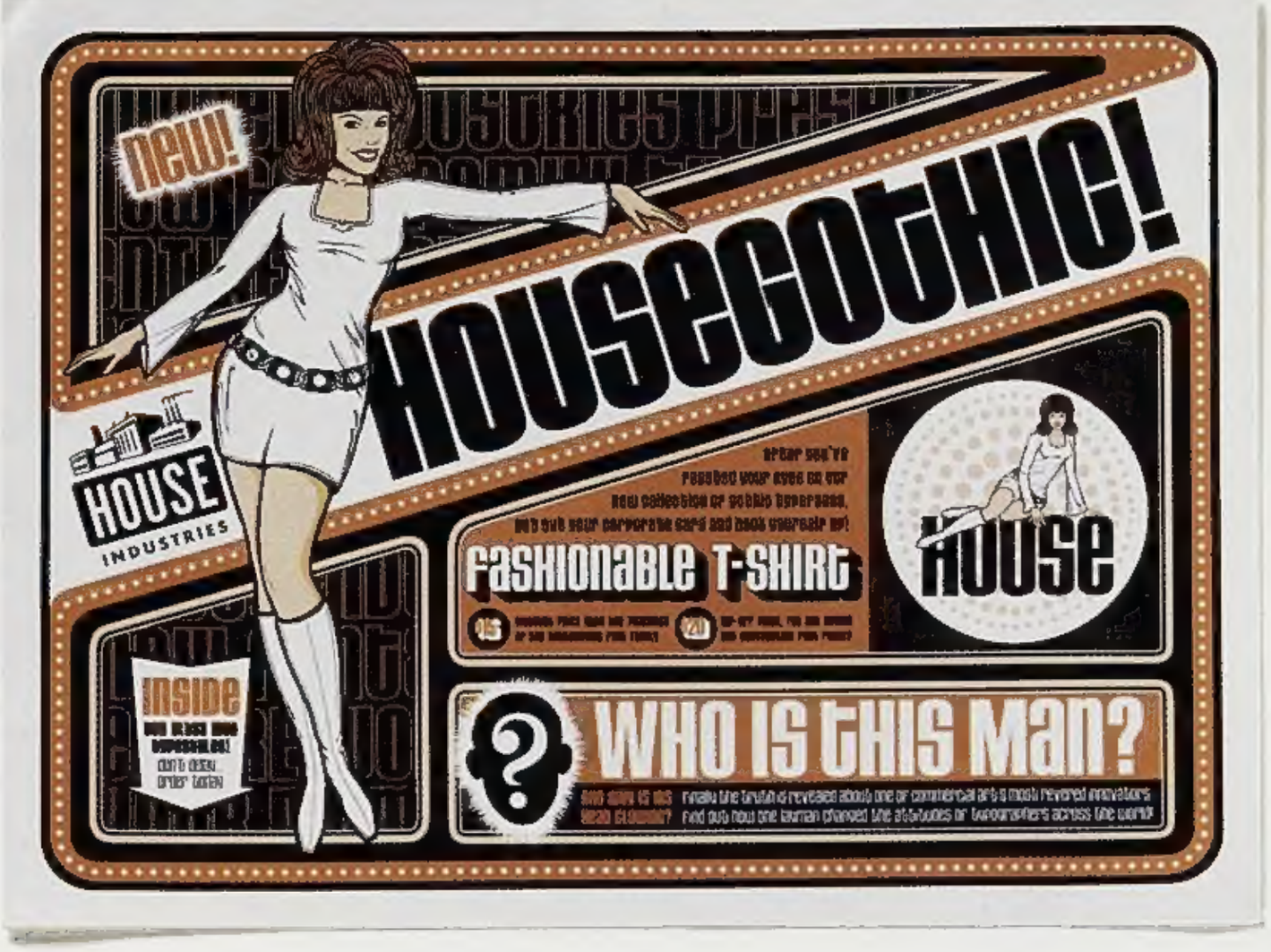
Thanks to the skillful glorification of adolescent taste by hundreds of graphic designers, one would be hard pressed to find any style or aesthetic today that could be defined as truly "low-culture." Everything from graffiti to clip art and the amateurish and inept have been embraced by mass-mid-culture. The very idea of a low culture has become offensive to our non-elitist, all-inclusive ideals of the 90s. Nothing is considered better or worse than anything else; everything is simply different – thus creating an illusion of equality. Does this recent shift in cultural values represent a bifurcation of the dominant culture and a re-examination of the designer's criteria of what is significant? Or is it just the result of expanding markets and contracting imaginations?

If graphic designers are going to be complicit in the elevation of the dubious taste of the lowest common denominator for the sake of commerce, then at least they can do it with style. Rick Valicenti of Thirst is a graphic and type designer who uses his considerable energy and imagination, combined with all the digital tricks available, to create his in-your-face, super-stylized digital kitsch. Thirst, like the pop diva Madonna, embodies a 90s phenomena in which pandering and exploitation is acceptable, even desirable, as long as you are the one pulling the strings. Valicenti's visual histrionics are designed to provoke a visceral response in viewers. His virtual velvet-painting style feeds our lust for graphic pyrotechnics and spectacle. Like pornography it gives you what you want even though you may be embarrassed to admit it. Not too long ago, this would have seemed cynical. Now it's just cool.

Not one to be left behind in the style wars, Valicenti got into the type business with Thirstype in 1993. In addition to his own designs, Thirstype also features fonts by graphic designers Barry Deck, Paul Sych, and Patrick King. Playing heavily on the cult of the individual, Thirstype is devoted to individual expression and (for a nominal fee) it can express ***your*** individuality for ***you*** too. Thirstype offers the newest and hottest hits from the latest designers; it's trendy and hip and that is nothing to be in the least bit embarrassed about.

Hey, if you can't beat 'em, be 'em.

Continued on page 8



HOUSEGOTHIC! Front panel of a poster announcing new typefaces. Designed by Brand Design Company. Published by House Industries, 1997.

Two items from the Thirstype *KultureKit*. Designed by Thirst. Published by Thirstype, 1996.





FUSE. Number 1, Summer 1991.
Edited by John Wozencroft.
Designed by Neville Brody.
Published by FontShop International.

Although it seems to be the favored strategy in the United States today, celebrating vernacular or adolescent taste as self-serving exploitation or self-aggrandizing angst is not the only option available in the quest for new form. In more tradition-bound Europe, radicalizing classical models is the preferred expression of rebellion. Jon Barnbrook, a London designer who works in print and video, is probably best known for his typeface Manson, later renamed MASON and released by Emigre Fonts in 1992. Barnbrook combines an interest in traditional typography and social commentary in his type foundry Virus.

Phil Baines is another notable British graphic and type designer who is equally adept at re-tooling the traditional. Although not available to the retail market, his typefaces have appeared in his own work as well as a number of publications. Baines's and Barnbrook's work combines the traditional with the contemporary in a personalized mix that is relevant without pandering to the lowest common denominator.[1] However, the majority of designers exploiting history today often do so only as a stylish affectation, without the rigorous scholarship necessary to transcend vacuous quotation. For the most part, graphic designers' relationship to the past is more transgressive than transformative, an attitude that continues to haunt us thanks to the lingering ambitions of modernism.

Continuing the modernist avant-garde tradition, Neville Brody's web site, magazine, and design conferences called FUSE, have been an international forum for experimental typography since 1991. Embracing the possibilities of the digital domain, FUSE has brought the endgame of modernism to typography and, like the fine art practices of the avant-garde, typefaces have now transcended their ***raison d'être.*** Depending on who you ask, typeface design in the 90s has either exploded its formal and conceptual boundaries or imploded into meaningless chaos. Although these two scenarios seem diametrically opposed, they may not be mutually exclusive. It is true that, these days, everything is possible and anything goes, but that doesn't mean that everything ***is*** happening and ***nothing*** is interesting.

In fact surprisingly little is happening today that will have any substantial lasting consequence for the aesthetics of type design. Although technology has made it possible for virtually everyone to design type, only the work of a few will be of any enduring significance, and it remains to be seen to what extent such distinctions will matter to the majority of future type consumers. Today, the most interesting and important developments in type design are related to the exposure, distribution, and protection of type as intellectual property. The shift in emphasis from corporate commodification to an individual's right to retain ownership of visual ideas in the open market is the most important development in type design in the 90s.*

1. For examples of Barnbrook's and Baines's typeface designs, see my essay, "The Rules of Typography According to Crackpots Experts," *Eye*, Volume 3, no. 11, 1993.

* See page 80.

The Digital Revolution of the 80s

Throughout the 80s most corporate designers continued to maintain faith in the international style. Massimo Vignelli's Helveticazation of Bodoni into Our Bodoni (1989) pretty much sums it up. But the 80s was also a time when technology started making internationalism accessible to everyone. Consequently, some designers began to question the inflexible and simplistic solutions of the international style and its ossification into corporate modernism.

In stark contrast to the 90s, the 80s actually felt like a typographic revolution was in progress. In 1985 ***Emigre*** magazine was started, which quickly became an international forum for new and experimental graphic design. ***Emigre*** also featured typefaces designed by Zuzana Licko. At a time when most graphic designers were pessimistic about the computer, she saw it as an opportunity to create new typefaces for a new technology. Licko's typefaces now span the range of possibilities, from bitmaps to Baskerville, illustrating the incredible changes that have taken place over the past eleven years.

In 1989 Emigre Fonts started distributing typefaces by other graphic designers and encouraged their use creating a new typography. The larger type distributors that never considered selling the kind of fonts that Emigre has sold since the 80s are currently promoting dozens of "new" and "experimental" typefaces of the sort that Emigre now typically rejects. It seems that the larger type companies haven't so much updated and revised their standards as they have abandoned them completely. Desperately trying to hang on to the majority of the market but clueless about how to develop and promote popular, new, and innovative typefaces, big type companies are now trying to outdo each other with low prices, service, and quantity.

One of the only larger type companies to figure out how to tap into fresh talent is Berlin-based FontShop International, probably the sharpest looking but most unwieldy collaborative to hit the type market since ATF (American Type Founders). FSI was founded by the gregarious Eric Spiekermann, whose tectonic typographic sensibility has been applied to just about everything. His typeface Meta has become one of the most ubiquitous typefaces in the world, or is at least as pervasive as a single typeface is likely to become. Typical of typefaces by graphic designers, Meta emerged as a response to a specific problem. Designers always seem to be looking for a neutral, no-nonsense, workhorse typeface which is also distinctive of its time. Every era confronts this same problem, nowadays it seems Meta is the answer. With design offices in Berlin, London, and San Francisco and a FontShop in almost every country, it's obvious that Spiekermann is trying to take over the world. But it is not likely that even Meta will dominate the corporate landscape to the extent Helvetica once did, because as the world gets smaller, regionalism becomes a bigger issue—particularly now that regionalism is no longer defined by geography but by affiliation. But hey, what self-respecting "information architect" wouldn't give world domination a try?

For most of the younger graphic designers in the 80s, the idea of creating your own lettering for your layouts seemed too much like old commercial art until Neville Brody made custom-lettering cool again Brody and Emigre Fonts showed designers that if you can't find what you want then you should make it yourself. However, it would be unfair to hold them personally responsible for the deluge of amateurish typefaces that followed. Actually, Brody's first typefaces were not produced on the computer but were hand-drawn and reproduced photomechanically. Desktop publishing came along just in time for Brody's typefaces; if the digital age had come just a couple of years later, they would only exist in back issues of ***The Face*** and ***Arena***. But now his fonts like Industria and Arcadia have become so ubiquitous in advertising that they are hardly noticed.

For many designers, the 80s seemed to have been a time when graphic designers exalted individual expression at the expense of nascent corporate professionalism. It was a revolution that pitted the young computer literate MFAs against the company men from the school of hard knocks. As the battle raged, neither culture nor commerce seemed to care, and by the mid 90s, nobody else did either. The legacy of the last decade is a bizarre reconciliation, evident in the new hybrid of "professional transgressors" who can be found in academia and advertising alike. Their work is on the cutting edge of a theoretical reality that moves faster than the speed of comprehension.

This moment of critical subversion was brought to you by Deconstruction Lite™.



Left: *U&lc* Volume 13, Number 3. Published by International Typeface Corporation. Edited by Edward Gottschall. Designed by Bob Farber

Below: two typefaces, Aquarius Dimensional and Downbeat Interlock, from the *Alphabet Thesaurus Volume 3*. Edited by Edward Rondthaler and the staff of Photo-Lettering, Inc. Published by Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1960

THE FUTURE IS NOW
Doing it for you

Phototype and the 60s & 70s

The 60s and 70s were the halfway point in the evolution from the craft of the type founder to the graphic designer who designs, promotes, and distributes his own typefaces. The technologies of the 60s – presstype in Britain and phototype in America – allowed flexibility and economy in the use and production of type. Consequently, many companies began to solicit more designs from graphic designers and the number of display fonts increased exponentially.

The aesthetic sensibility of phototype will always be synonymous with the designers who created typefaces for the International Typeface Corporation and Photo-Lettering, Inc. in New York City. Graphic designers and illustrators like Milton Glaser, Seymour Chwast, Herb Lubalin, Ed Benguiat, Tom Carnase, and Peter Max produced a staggering quantity of display faces in the numerous permutations that phototype made possible.

Most of their typefaces were snazzy reinterpretations of more traditional typefaces, including such designs as Didot Contempo, Super Cooper, Clarendona, Baskervale Swash, and Bauhaus Prisma Shadow. Or they reflected their designer's personality and style, as in Benguiat Zenodipity Wide, Milton Glaser Babyfat Shaded, Sam Dom Milano Swash Italic, West Doofus Casual, and Hodginson's Fat, Dumb & Happy. But their main defining characteristic was an expressive sense of fun and style, which is reflected in names like Green Buzzard, Lunar Progress, Shaggy, Swinger, Cathode Ray, Sisty Rubato, Latinique, Japanette, and Microflair Dropshadow. However, the only place one is likely to see those typefaces today is in the old Photo-Lettering catalogs or an issue of *U&lc* magazine. Today it is hard to think of those outdated typefaces as anything but cornball and tacky. But they serve as both a warning and reminder of the mutability of taste, style, and fashion. After all, are those typefaces really any better or worse than what we see from graphic designers today?

Recently, 60s and 70s styles have come back, and for those old enough to remember them the first time around, it is alternately a source of amusement and embarrassment. I suspect that this second hand polyester modernism is just being tried on and will just as quickly be thrown off. The super-groovy type styles of that era, like many of today's grunge fonts, resonate loudly but have little staying power. The truth is, it makes no difference whether it's the 60s or 90s: when graphic designers get their hands on the alphabet they can't help but lay on the style. I personally don't think there is anything wrong with that – after all, style is not a four letter word – **but it's close.**

Continued on next page

Postwar Optimism and the 50s

No single typeface captures the easygoing optimism and overall nerdiness of 50s America better than Pete Dom's eponymous Dom Casual (1951). Similarly, in Germany, Imre Reiner's script faces, Reiner Script (1951), Bazaar (1956), Mercurius (1957), London Script (1957), and Pepita (1959), captured the European version of the 50s zeitgeist. However, the one designer whose typographic style expressed the era with the most flair is Frenchman Roger Excoffon, who practiced in Paris in the 50s.

In his influential advertising work for U&O and his script faces like Choc (1953), Mistral (1953) and Diane (1956), Excoffon articulated a stylishly modern spirit, conveying a contemporary sensibility not only of economy and speed but also of casual elegance.[2] *His most renowned font was a sans serif designed in the early 60s, Antique Olive, named after the Fonderie Olive where he had been art director since 1947. Antique Olive was an original response to the new sans serifs like Helvetica and Universe, but with a much more assertive character that skillfully retains as much serviceability as its more austere predecessors.*

In the 50s, modernist design principles had not yet ossified into dogma; nor had the designer's vision of the future been deflated by cynicism. Their faith in technology and optimism about the future were as heartfelt as they were naive. Their guileless outlook is evident in their preference for personalized script typefaces that were more human than humanist, more like handwriting than calligraphy or lettering.

The scripts of the 50s were lighthearted and funny, as well as smart. They were casual but never crude, modern but not mechanical, and animated without becoming cartoonish. By mastering these subtle distinctions, the designers of the 50s created type styles that were accessible without sacrificing quality. That lesson seems to have gotten lost in today's fast-paced digital age, which bombards us constantly with crude mechanical cartoons. When was the last time you saw a new typeface that looked like it was having fun? Have times really gotten so bad or is being happy just too nerdy?

2. *For more on Roger Excoffon's work, see Sebastian Carter,* Twentieth Century Type Designers. *Taplinger, 1987.*

Tradition and Innovation in Metal Type

DUE TO THE great expense, time, and expertise involved in the production of metal type, it was primarily the realm of full-time type designers. However, the few typefaces that were produced by graphic designers early on were important in advancing type design. It is not unusual for the innovations in a discipline to come from outside sources but for those innovations to be fruitful, there must be a strong tradition from which to grow. In the heydays of metal type foundries, there were a number of graphic designers whose type designs personified the relationship between tradition and innovation.

Jan Tschichold was a graphic designer whose work epitomized both the modern and traditional paradigms of typography. Fortunately, through his writing and teaching, Tschichold helped articulate the evolving ideologies of typography. His books *New Typography* (1928) and *Asymmetric Typography* (1935) were combination manifesto and how-to books, and came to be the graphic designer's Bible of modern typography. Under the influence of Bauhaus design, such as Herbert Bayer's Universal typeface (1925), Tschichold designed an experimental single-case typeface in 1929.[3] However, designers were surprised when Tschichold reconsidered his allegiance to modernism, delivering the lecture "THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITION IN TYPOGRAPHY" (1964) and designing a classical typeface, Sabon, in the early 60s.[4] Much has been made of the contradictions in Tschichold's work, but with postmodern insight, it is easier for us to understand the complex and sometimes contradictory nature of practicing typography as cultural communication. Tradition and the innovations of modernism are inextricably interrelated, with modernism as part of the continuing tradition of cultural re-evaluation, but in Tschichold's time, the lines were too freshly and clearly drawn between the two.

By contrast, the United States has always had a tradition of the new, so the distinctions between modern and traditional were not so dogmatically drawn. In the U.S., modernism was just one style among many which could be mixed and matched as needed. This aesthetic "impurity" has led many designers to erroneously conclude that the American aesthetic lacks refinement. This bias is evident in most published histories and the European chauvinism that pervades journalism, conferences, and organizations concerned with type design. Consequently, it is also evident in the preferences of most American typographers, who know all about the latest design stars but are generally ignorant of the history of their more accomplished compatriots. Typographic education in American schools has always been inferior to that of European schools. American type design did not slowly grow out of the ancient craft traditions of stone-carving and calligraphy, but emerged from industrial type founding and the work of the commercial letterer (engrosser) and sign painter. These contemporary crafts were passed on in trade schools, like the Frank Holm School in Chicago. The instructors were working commercial artists like Frederick Goudy who taught their trade to students such as William Addison Dwiggins and Ozwald Cooper.

3. Tschichold's single-case typeface was not available commercially until recently. A poorly drawn version called Electric Tschichold is available from the Electric Typographer, though the lack in quality was compensated for by its price, as well as the addition of a menagerie of aesthetically compat ible "barnyard animals." It is also available from The Foundry, as Architype Tschichold, along with many other experimental typefaces of the early 20th-century avant-garde. Obviously, in the posthistorical digital age everything is up for grabs.

4. "THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITION IN TYPOGRAPHY" was a lecture presented by Tschichold at the Hochschule für Graphik und Buchkunst in Leipzig, October 9, 1964 For Tschichold's more traditional ideas see Jan Tschichold, *The Form of the Book· Essays on the Morality of Good Design* Washington: Hartley & Marks, 1991

Continued on next page

Cooper designed Cooper Black in 1925 "for far sighted printers with near sighted customers." A single size of the metal font weighed in at 81 pounds – at the time, it was literally and figuratively the world's biggest font. Cooper Black was one of the most popular typefaces of all time, and even today, Cooper's work has a cult following among type designers. I have to admit that I had Cooper Black in the back of my mind when I designed a bold and blobby typeface called "Keedy Sans." Not unlike the designers from the New York School in the 60s, Cooper took the commercial lettering styles that he used in his advertising work and developed them into typefaces. There are no pretensions to classicism or prissy refinements in Cooper's work: The only thing timeless about his typefaces is their quality in craftsmanship.[5]

Just as Cooper's typefaces were derived from his unique lettering style, so were the typefaces designed by his old classmate Dwiggins. It was Dwiggins who first coined the term "graphic designer" to describe exactly what he was doing all the time. He wrote one of the first how-to books for designers, *Layout in Advertising*. Steven Heller refers to Dwiggins as the missing link in design history – a bridge between the classical and the modern. I like to think of him as the quintessential American graphic designer. Dwiggins designed his first typeface, Metro, in 1929 at the age of 44. In reference to Metro, Walter Tracey said he was "the only American designer to create a sans serif type of any merit." Tracey went on to say that Dwiggins also created "one of the best book romans of the twentieth century" – referring to Electra, designed in 1935.[6] And Dwiggins's design based on Scotch Roman, which he called Caledonia, is one of the most successful text faces in the United States, rivaling Times Roman in its use in mass-market books. He designed twelve typefaces altogether, of which only five were made available.[7]

Ironically, the somewhat forgotten and unrecognized Dwiggins may be a model for design practice in the future. Many of his typeface designs were of a highly experimental and speculative nature (like FUSE fonts), and his use of emblems and stenciled ornaments are akin to FellaParts, Whirligigs, and dingbat fonts.[8] Dwiggins was also a whimsical critic who published stories and essays about design – a precursor to all those cranks (including me) who write and rant in the pages of *Emigre*. And most importantly, as the original and first graphic designer, he was always more of a content-provider than a useful intermediary.[9]

5. For more on Ozwald Cooper, see *The Book of Oz Cooper.* Chicago: Society of Typographic Arts, 1949.
6. For more on Dwiggins's type design, see Walter Tracy, *Letters of Credit: A View of Type Design*. New York: David R. Godine Publisher, 1986.
7. For more on Caledonia, see Alexander Lawson, *Anatomy of a Typeface*. New York: David R. Godine Publisher, 1990.
8. For more on Dwiggins's ornaments, see Dorothy Abbe, *Stenciled Ornaments & Illustration*. Boston: Trustees of the Boston Public Library, 1980.
9. For more on Dwiggins's work, see Paul Shaw, "Tradition and Innovation: The Design Work of William Addison Dwiggins," *Design Issues*, Volume 1, no. 2, Fall 1984.

Continued from page 13

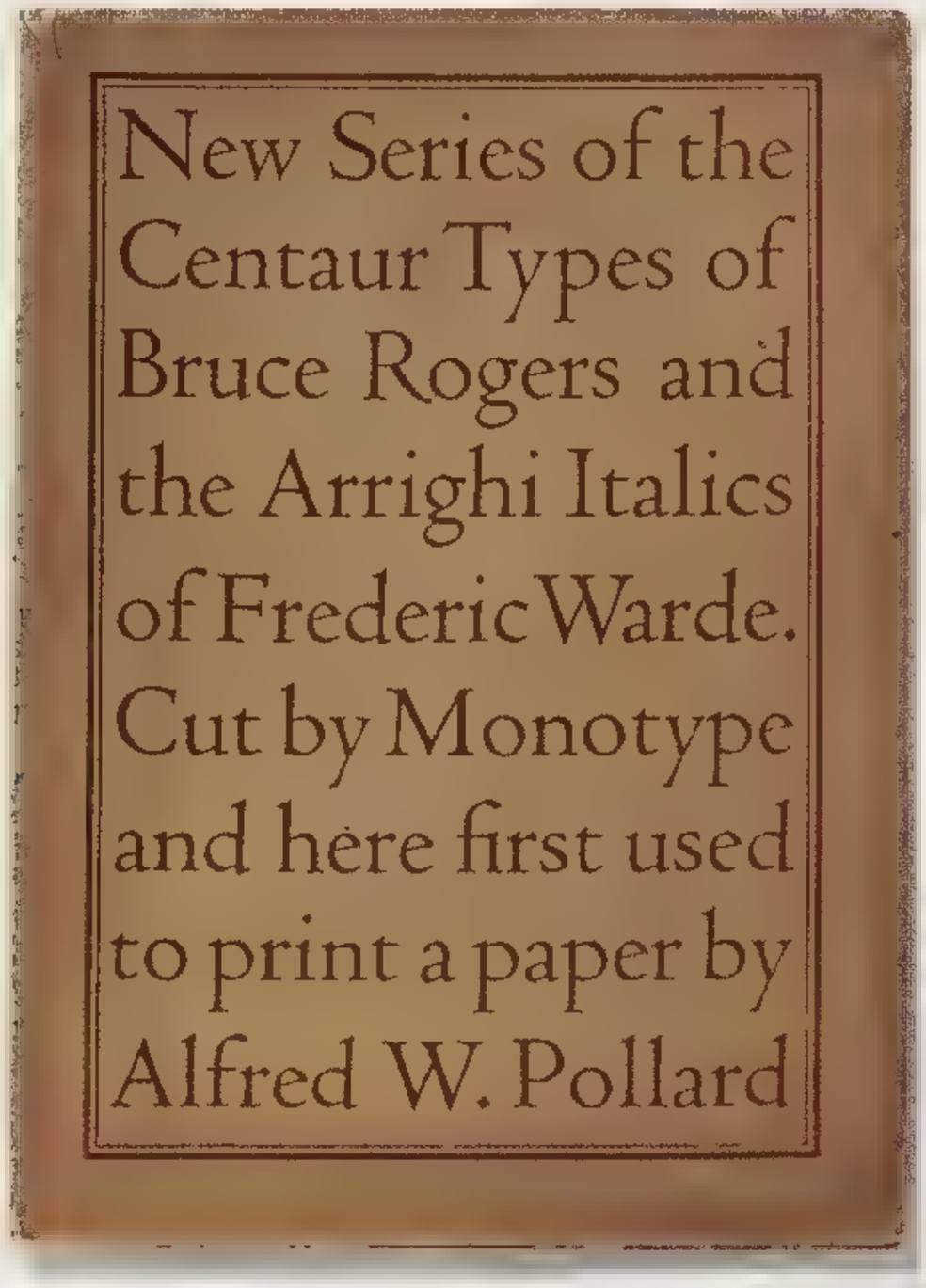
Bruce Rogers, on the other hand, was a useful intermediary who specialized in book design and designed typefaces as well. Rogers's typeface based on Nicolas Jenson's Venetian types was named Centaur (1929, Monotype) after the first book it was used in, *Le Centaure*.[10] In his book *Printing Types*, D.B. Updike wrote that Centaur *"appears to me one of the best roman founts yet designed by an American, and of its kind, the best anywhere."* As a book designer Rogers was associated with various presses, and he even did a short stint as a pressman. Indeed, the further back in history one delves, the more difficult it is to make a clear distinction between graphic designers, type designers, and printers. Technically, because the term graphic design did not exist before Dwiggins put it to use in 1922, that should be the logical cut-off point for this survey of graphic designers as type designers.[11]

One could make the argument that someone like John Baskerville was a graphic designer because he was concerned with his books as a whole – the paper, ink, binding, and layout, in addition to the type. Likewise, Geoffroy Tory, as a "Renaissance" man, was more of a generalist, not exclusively interested in type design. So are they type designers or graphic designers? In the end, or I should say in the beginning, it all started with calligraphy, where there was no distinction between the person who made the letters and the person who put them to use. Looking at calligraphy, I think you begin to see how arbitrary the distinctions are between type designer and graphic designer. This is particularly true these days, when full-time type designers are extremely rare and graphic designers are morphing into media directors, design consultants, and information architects (whatever those are). The distinctions between how you do it and what you call yourself when you do it are hardly as important as what you are doing to it.

10. For a first person account of the design of Centaur, see the recent reprint edition of Bruce Rogers's, *The Centaur Types*. Purdue University Press, 1996.
11. W.A. Dwiggins first used the phrase "graphic designer," in an article in the *Boston Evening Transcript*, August, 29, 1922
See also Steven Heller, The Man Who Invented Graphic Design, *Eye*, Volume 6, no. 26, Winter 1996

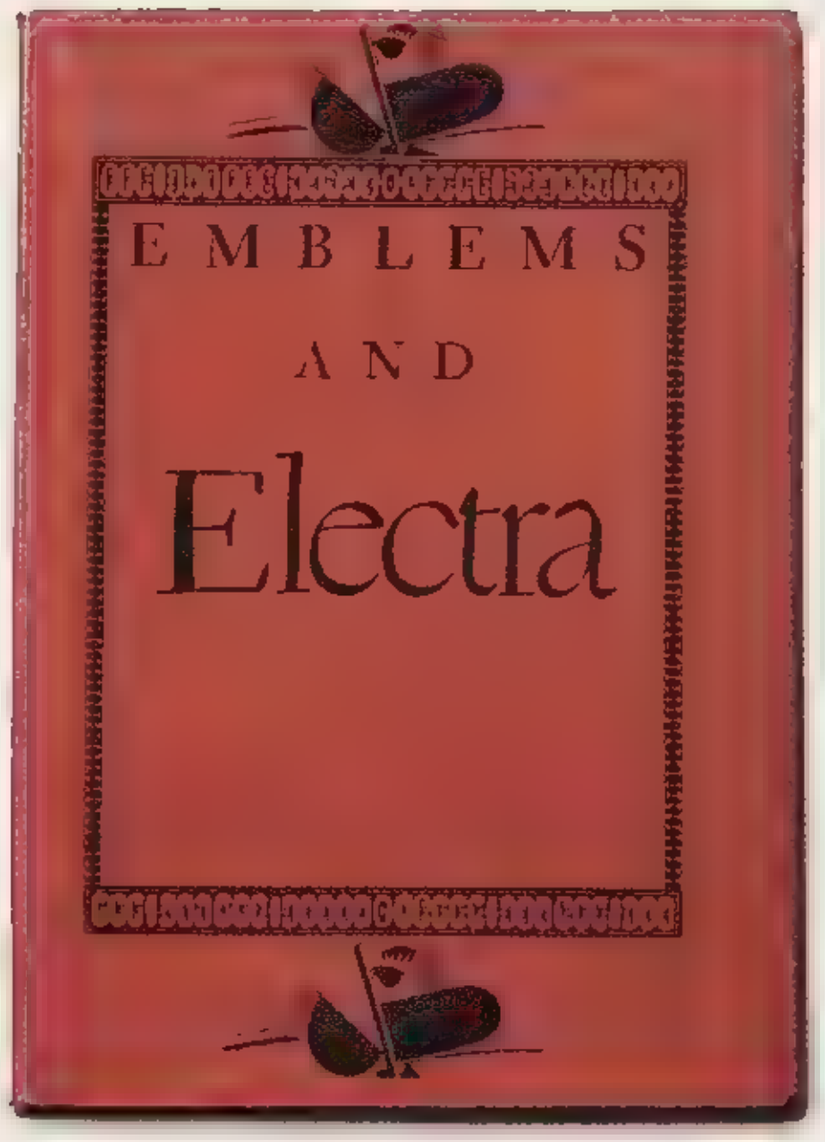


Linotype Faces.
Type catalog showing Metro, a typeface designed by W A. Dwiggins.
Published by Mergenthaler Linotype Company, 1929

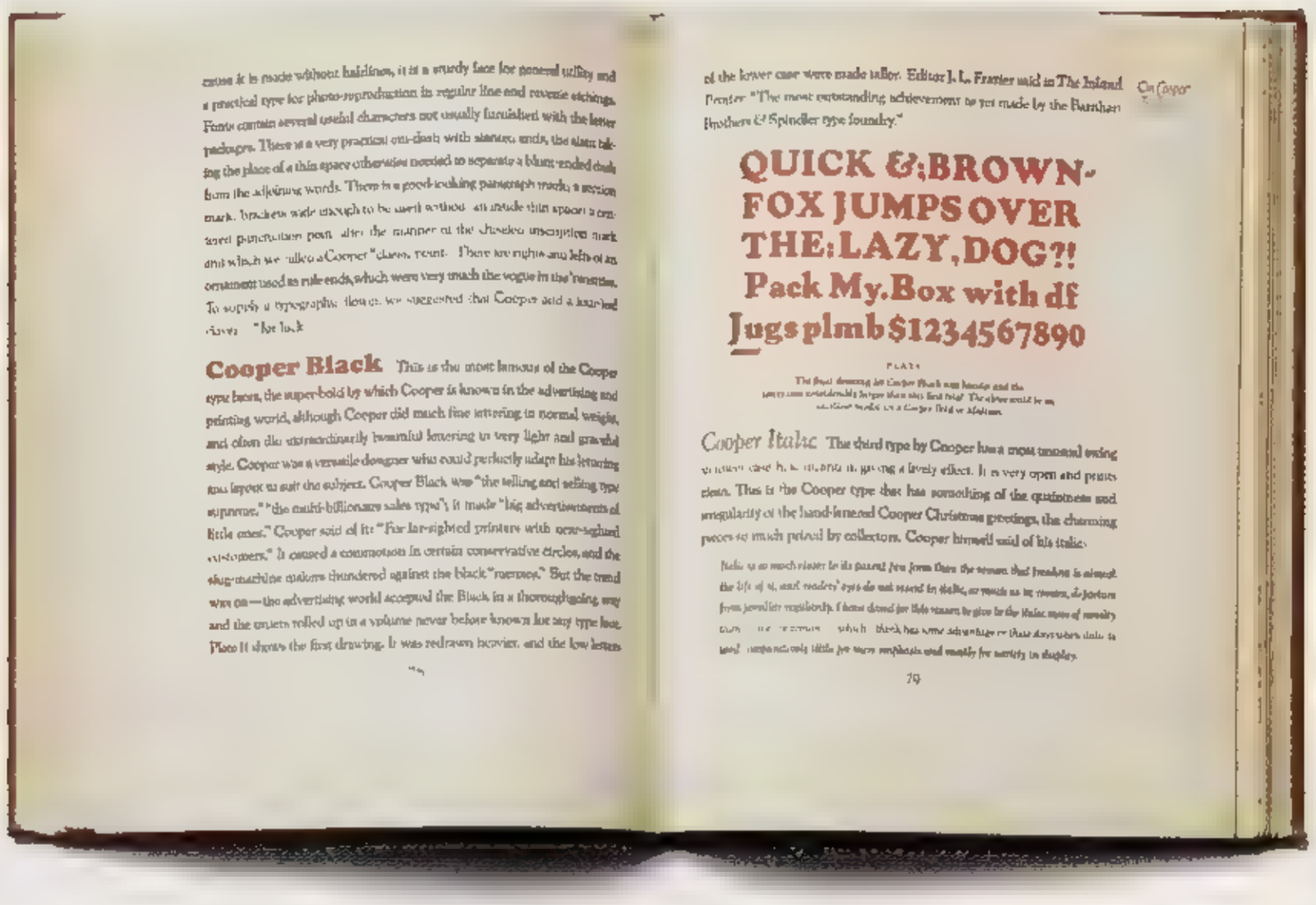


Typespecimen booklet introducing Centaur
Typeface and booklet designed by Bruce Rogers.
Published by Lanston Monotype Corporation, Ltd 1929

Continued on next page



Emblems and Electra.
Typespecimen booklet designed by W.A. Dwiggins.
Published by Mergenthaler Linotype Company, 1935



The Book of Oz Cooper
Published by the Society of Typographic Arts, 1949

The Decline of Ignorance?

In the past when graphic designers had a great idea for a typeface, it was realized in partnership with the foundries. For example, type foundry director C.H. Griffith worked with Dwiggins, while punch cutter John Handy interpreted the designs of Baskerville. I suspect if the designers of the past would have been able to realize their ideas instantly by themselves, the results would have been less successful. Today, typefaces by graphic designers are becoming the rule as opposed to an occasional exception. It is no longer economically feasible for foundries to support in house type designers. The type designer of the future will most likely be a free agent who depends on a combination of commissions and retail sales of their fonts. From now on, the vast majority of typefaces will be designed by people whose day job is graphic design. One big advantage of being a graphic designer who designs typefaces is that you get to create your own promotional material. That is why designer type is usually ensconced in a lot of designer hype. But a real disadvantage for graphic designers is that they are usually ignorant of type design history and are therefore unable to contextualize their own production within it. As a result, designer type frequently lacks a depth of understanding that characterizes the difference between a good typeface and a great typeface. New converts to type design tend to be overzealous in estimating the potential of their contribution. For every innovative typeface by a graphic designer, there are hundreds of duplications or reinventions of existing typefaces. In 1986 Neville Brody proclaimed ***the death of typography.*** Not to be outdone, David Carson went on to declare ***the end of print.*** Now I would like to take a turn and proclaim ***the decline of ignorance.*** Anyone with access to a computer can claim to be a graphic or type designer. Because of new technologies, the acquisition of skills and expertise seems deceptively easy, and standards of quality are less universal in their application. Now the only thing that separates the dilettante from the expert is experience and intelligence. And one hopes that intelligence is still a valued asset in typography.

It is important to remember that our typographic future does not depend on the skill and intelligence of type designers but on the good judgment and sensitivity of the graphic designers who select and use their typefaces. After all, it is the graphic designer who gets the last word; typefaces don't jump out of those little suitcases by themselves. There are too many well designed typefaces that are ignored because designers have not educated themselves beyond the necessary basics, or do not have the knowledge to critically evaluate and identify a typeface's inherent strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, most designers rely on a few poorly conceived and executed interpretations of "classic" typefaces, or the latest "cool by consensus" font from design annuals. The fact that there are a lot of great typefaces languishing in obscurity while many mediocre ones are being overused can only be blamed on the ill judgment of graphic designers, not type designers.

History will decide in the long run—and commerce in the short—what is truly significant in typography. But only you can decide what is significant in your typography, and for those whom you touch by your work. You have a choice, of making a place for yourself within the tradition of intelligent typography or losing yourself in the ignorant bliss of the status quo.

End

Mr Keedy is a graphic designer, a typeface designer, and an instructor at California Institute of the Arts

DECAY AND RENEWAL IN TYPEFACE MARKETS

VARIATIONS ON A TYPOGRAPHICAL THEME

by Alan Marshall

For years now, the typographical press and captains of type-related industries have been telling us how new, low-cost, flexible technologies have plunged traditional typeface markets into chaos and threaten to put an end to quality type design. The argument is simple enough: photography and digital computers have made it virtually impossible to prevent the piracy of type designs by competitors and the unlimited duplication of fonts by users. Lacking any effective systems of industrial protection, the whole circuit of typeface design, production, and distribution is collapsing.

Type founders, both traditional and digital, can no longer earn enough profits to be able to invest in new type designs. And if foundries can no longer invest in new type designs, type designers will no longer be able to devote themselves to the highly skilled and time-consuming processes that are the prerequisite of typographical quality. As for training, it will simply disappear in the absence of financial incentives. If nothing is done soon (*it may even be too late already*), we will be condemned to a world of badly copied, rehashed versions of classic typefaces, dispensed by the CD-ROM ful in cornflake packets, or worse, harebrained designs from half-trained "artists" hell-bent on expressing themselves at the expense of (supposedly old-fashioned) notions of form, function, and legibility.

FILOSOFIA 24, 14, 10, 22, 18 AND 14 PT

These claims seem as irrefutable as they are simple. Well...almost. They sidestep two important points. First, how is it that this imminent collapse has remained res olutely imminent—and just as resolutely intangible—for more than a quarter of a century? It was, after all, the change-over from hot metal to phototypesetting in the 1960s that started the whole debate. Second, how do the doomsayers explain the fact that, on the eve of the long-expected collapse of legitimate type design and production, there are more typefaces in circulation (many of them good) and more people involved in "type design," than at any time since Gutenberg's invention started putting scribes out of work five hundred years ago?

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Before trying to answer these two questions, the arguments should be put into the more general context of the debate which has been raging for several decades about the future of print media. The very real difficulties facing traditional type producers constitute only one of many stages in a process which has been steadily gathering momentum for almost half a century: the transformation of typeface markets began when the Varityper and later the IBM composer and dry-transfer lettering started tak ing the bread from the mouths of honest type founders.

Thirty or forty years ago, the production of justified text on souped-up typewriters seemed a pretty minor problem. Nobody imagined that the bounds between writing and typesetting could break down as completely as they have over the last ten years. When the Varityper was first introduced in the 1930s, it raised nary a brow among typesetters, most of whom did not consider such "low-grade" work to be real typesetting. The printing fraternity (and a fraternity is what it was in those days) did not really begin to feel the cold wind of change until the late 1960s when Marshall McLuhan started proclaiming the imminent implosion of Gutenberg's galaxy. According to the Toronto media guru, the printed word was fated for replacement by unbeatably fast, economical, and environment-friendly computer media.

Over time, those who had not been squeezed (or frightened) out of what was once quaintly known as the "printing trade" (now a segment of a huge communication industry) became slowly accustomed to the fact that new technologies were bound to come and go with the same regularity as the passing of the seasons. It thus became increasingly apparent that the prophets of doom had based their arguments on a rather simplistic vision of technological change. New electronic media were not replacing print as had been initially predicted. Rather, they were relegating it to a somewhat slower growing share of a vast, rapidly expanding information market.

In due course, encouraged by equipment manufacturers and venture capitalists who believed that new technology had unleashed a perpetual spending spree, printers eventually regained the confidence they had lost in the years when the potential of the paperless office loomed ominously. For an all too brief decade or so (we are talking about the mid-1970s to the mid 1980s) printers were back on the crest of the wave, armed with new state-of-the-art equipment. It was also a time—no doubt the last—when it was possible for the average printer to live from day to day without having to seriously face up to the longer-term implications of the introduction of microcomputers and the linking of high- and low-wage economies through information highways. So long as the technological waves were not too big, it was still possible to tread water and hope for the best. That firms were able to survive and even thrive in such troubled times was the result of several favorable economic and organizational factors, notably the massive influx of low-paid, semiskilled operators into a traditionally highly skilled and highly paid sector, plus the exceptional buoyancy of the advertising industry.

Before long, however, it was doom and gloom again. Only this time McLuhan's audio-visual media menace had been replaced by a much more insidious threat—*desktop publishers*—that rag, tag, and bobtail of price-cutting newcomers who, armed with the inevitable Macintosh, were

FILOSOFIA 14 AND 18 PT

making their nests in the once glorious graphic industries like a bunch of typographically illiterate *cuckoos*. In Europe the situation was even worse, for recessions and international competition were upstaging the all too numerous weaknesses of the printing industry (over-capacity, dumping, and chaotic labor markets). The introduction of interactive, user-friendly technologies effectively deregulated the printing industry, exacerbated by the politics of economic and political decision-makers convinced that everything would come out okay in the end without any outside interference in this best of all possible automated, market-led worlds. (The United States was largely cushioned from recession by its notoriously protectionist attitude to the printing and publishing industries.)

The origins of this second wave of typographical pessimism stemmed from attempts to eliminate double keyboarding (first by author, then by compositor) by the interfacing of word processors with phototypesetters. However, what started out as an encroachment on the territory of printers turned into a full-blown campaign to bring typography to the masses. Inevitably, the opening up of the traditionally closed world of typography by desktop publishing revived the prophecies of doom: the so-called "democratization" of typography could only lead to the irreversible breakdown and ultimate extinction of literate culture. For how could anyone possibly imagine that secretaries, entrepreneurs, engineers, managers, assorted academics, and would-be authors would ever be capable of understanding the subtleties of the noble art of typography?

Compared to the threat posed by McLuhan's global village, this was a radically new situation. In McLuhan's, day the high cost of traditional equipment and know-how would have imposed a more or less negotiated solution: enlightened and honorable professionals would have carved up new territories for themselves within an all-embracing communications industry. With desktop publishing, however, Armageddon was really upon us, for a negotiated solution was out of the question. We were talking of nothing less than putting sophisticated typographical tools in the hands of the lowest echelons of the word-processing classes!

THE GUARDIANS OF TYPOGRAPHICAL QUALITY

One would have expected that as new techniques became more familiar and initially "revolutionary" forms of production and work organization more commonplace, the essentially protectionist arguments which traditional graphic arts professionals had advanced in the early days of phototypesetting and word processing would have been abandoned. This was not the case. With a bit of tweaking here and there to keep them up to date with the state of the art they have remained virtually intact and continue to underpin the debate over the future of typographical markets in a digital world.

It may seem a rather sanguine attitude to adopt, but it would be foolish to deny that many of the printers who have gone out of business over the last quarter century deserved their fate. The grassroots of the printing trade is, after all, notoriously conservative, protectionist, and sexist. Printers have traditionally resisted any attempts to introduce semiskilled workers, many of them women, into high-skill areas. They considered anything related to typewriter composition or xerography beneath them. It is equally undeniable that, when it comes to typographical standards, a large section of the traditional printing trade has always been much more interested in the *bottom line* than the *baseline*.

FILOSOFIA 10, 14, 16 AND 11 PT

It must be noted that desktop publishers, too, deserved their exile into oblivion, which occurred after the initial Macintosh mania subsided and customers finally started counting the pennies they were putting into their print budgets. For a large number of desktop publishers truly did not realize that typewriting in Times or Univers is not the same thing as producing a well-composed document adapted to its purpose.

But if truth be told, the current debate about the future of typography is not so much an aesthetic or ethical debate (for who is to safeguard standards of typographical quality?) as an economic one—as it always has been. This is not to say that aesthetics and ethics do not have an important role to play in the typographical industries. But disputes over market shares and their inevitable corollaries the deregulation of typeface markets and piracy—are as ancient as type itself. After all, Gutenberg was the first industrial-scale counterfeiter. He carefully modeled his first fonts on the manuscript hands of scribes and copyists in order to get his foot in the door of a market which was likely to react against any sudden change which might devalue the symbolic value of the book. Barely half a century later, Lyons printers were shamelessly copying Aldus Manutius' italic letterforms a year after its first appearance. However, up until the mid 19th century, there were no shortcuts for typeface pirates who still had to go through the long, costly, and highly skilled processes of cutting steel punches, striking and justifying matrices, and casting individual lead types using a hand mold.

With the industrialization of print in the 19th century, type piracy became somewhat more industrial. As advertising became increasingly strident and as Linotype and Monotype eroded type founders' traditional volume markets in text faces, the latter turned to the production of display and novelty faces to stay afloat. The shorter life span of such faces, plus the introduction of electrotyping (an electrolytic process by which a mold could be made from an existing type) and pantographic engraving encouraged producers (foundries) and users (printers) alike to copy existing designs. As Linotype and Monotype, invented by Mergenthaler and Lanston respectively, grew increasingly respectable typographically, and as standards steadily rose in the wake of the private press movement, the illicit duplicating of fonts subsided (copies were on the whole of poor quality) and piracy moved upstream, into the design office. Since then, type foundries have been regularly embroiled in disputes and lawsuits among themselves. Even the establishment of ATypI in 1957 to promote typographical standards through international protection for typefaces has had little effect on curtailing the tendency of founders to copy the successful faces of their competitors. A detailed account of piracy among traditional type founders would provide an entertaining object lesson in the contradictions between typographical theory and practice.

THE TYPOGRAPHICAL PECKING ORDER

In the good old days, when Monotype sneered at Linotype and everybody sneered at Compugraphic, typefaces were the property of the select few. They cost money—*sometimes lots of it*. Typewriter composition and dry-transfer lettering had of course opened the door to the hitherto uninitiated. But as a rule, the dividing line between the professional type user and the amateur was still fairly easy to identify. Also, Letraset (dry-transfer lettering) was used above all for advertising—a dominant source of typographical pollution since the 19th century—and not for books where, as we all know, "serious" typography takes place.

FILOSOFIA 14. 9 5. 14. 16 PT

Throughout the phototypesetting period however, until it gave way to desktop publishing, type remained a very specialized tool, its accessibility limited by *cost* and *skill*. Even with digital typesetters, the illicit use of fonts was relatively uncommon, restricted to firms with the computer skills necessary to get around the protection systems. As a result, the problem of piracy was kept within the trade.

An irreversible process was already underway, however. With the advent of phototypesetting, the traditionally hermetic world of typography started to become increasingly porous. New type users were appearing not only in offices and on the fringes of the design world, but also at the very heart of mainstream typographical production. Rene Higonnet and Louis Moyroud, the inventors of the 1945 Lumitype Photon, the first phototypesetting machine to break definitively with the lead-based techniques inherited from Gutenberg and Mergenthaler, were telecommunication engineers and knew nothing about type design—a considerable handicap given that no self-respecting typesetter would buy a machine that could not perform as well typographically as faithful hot-metal machine. In order to break into the market long since carved up by Linotype and Monotype, Higonnet and Moyroud had to undergo a crash course in typography. And just as Linotype and Monotype before them had imitated the most successful types culled from type founders' catalogs, Photon, the company established to manufacture the first phototypesetting machine, in turn "borrowed" many of its faces directly from its hot-metal competitors with out even attempting to adapt them to compensate for the effects of ink squash. Needless to say, such a policy did not go over well. Partly under pressure from their French partner Charles Peignot (one of the founding fathers of ATypI), Photon "went legit" and started to produce faces from original drawings. Even then, however, Photon had a tendency to cut corners and it was generally acknowledged that the fonts created in Wilmington for the American market were not up to the quality of those produced in Paris by Deberny & Peignot for the European market.

As for Compugraphic, founded by Bill Garth in 1960 after he was fired as chairman of the board of Photon (which he also founded) for not turning it into a profit making enterprise, it followed

FILOSOFIA 23, 14 AND 12 PT

the same pattern, borrowing faces from here and there.

(just as Garth had borrowed several patents from Higonnet and Moyroud to build his first machines—a loan which was to cost Compugraphic a large sum of money out of court)

In the case of Photon and Compugraphic (and of various manufacturers seeking to extend their existing electronics activities into the field of phototypesetting), typographical quality was a distinct problem when considered from the point of view of the letterforms. With hindsight, however, this can be seen as perfectly natural, for process innovation always takes precedence over product innovation in periods of major technical change. Like the inventors of the Linotype and Monotype before them, and the inventors of the Macintosh after, Higonnet, Moyroud, Garth, and their collaborators had their hands full getting their machines to work within the accepted tolerances of their industry without having to worry about the quality of their fonts. A faulty character alignment is unforgiving, even to the eye of an unsophisticated reader.

On the other hand, a mediocre font can produce acceptable results in the hands of a good typographer. Perfecting a largely untried technology in conditions of industrial production while trying to open up a new sector in a notoriously conservative market is enough to keep even the most efficient organization busy. In a field in which aesthetic factors are crucial but subtle, it is tempting to copy existing models. Product innovation (in this case, typographic quality) only comes into its own as a source of income when the benefits of process innovation have been sufficiently eroded by competitors who have gotten around or who have licensed the original technology. Such a policy worked for Gutenberg and his contemporaries; it worked for Mergenthaler and Lanston; and in the end it worked for Photon and Compugraphic which were both in their time the world's leading manufacturers of phototypesetting equipment.

But despite all the changes brought about by phototypesetting, fonts remained expensive. The shift from lead to film radically altered the skills involved in typeface production and made it incomparably cheaper than what it was in the days of the metal punch-cutter. The only real obstacle was the fact that the market for new type designs was still largely in the hands of the manufacturers of phototypesetting equipment who could control the cost of fonts to the end user. And manufacturers were loath to reduce the price of fonts.

In the pre-Macintosh world of dedicated typesetting machines, typography was a minor part of the overall cost of the manufacturing process. The question was how to fit it into the marketing strategy. Manufacturers could either sell fonts cheap, thus offsetting the high cost of the new machines, offering greater flexibility to users, and gaining a major advantage over their hot-metal competitors in typographic terms; or they could base their prices on the higher expense of traditional metal matrices, and simply cream off the profits for as long as the market would stand it. For more than a decade, phototypesetter manufacturers chose the latter strategy—until 1968 when Compugraphic ruffled everybody's feathers by launching a price war.

However, even given the price cuts which followed the introduction of Compugraphic's first stand alone phototypesetting machines, fonts remained specialized tools. Economies of scale and mass distribution remained impossible so long as composition systems used dedicated calculators and each manufacturer stuck to its own operating system. As a result, the typeface market remained relatively stable, despite the technological revolution. Unlicensed use of proprietary fonts on multiple machines within phototypesetting houses was an annoyance, but at least a limited one—hardly the end of the world.

Ultimately, the waves created by three generations of phototypesetting equipment would amount to nothing when compared with the famous "fourth wave" of technological advancement—the mass-produced personal computer of the late 1980s which would force traditional typesetting system manufacturers to abandon their dedicated machines. From then on, professional typesetters could no longer use the high cost of machines or fonts to maintain their monopoly on the presentation of the printed word. Survival in the new typographical democracy would now depend on *intelligence, imagination, and know-how*—which as we all know are not bundled with graphics packages or micro-computer systems (not even with Macs).

FILOSOFIA 10, T. 16, 12 PT

THE END OF THE MORISON/MONOTYPE DOCTRINE

In order to understand the transformations which typeface markets are currently undergoing it's necessary to look beyond economic and technical factors. In particular, we must address the assumptions on which the *criteria* of typographical respectability have been based for most of the 20th century, as well as how they have been called into question in recent years. The typographical order which came to an end with digital micro computers and PostScript was based on a historical approach to typography and letterforms, an approach which had its roots in the work of William Morris and the private presses at the turn of this century. At the time, typographical production was suffering from the effects of the rapid industrialization of printing and publishing which had allowed large numbers of what the French call *noircisseurs de papier* (blackeners of paper) to ply their trade with impunity. The replacement of hand-setting by machine composition seriously destabilized typeface markets. And, as we have already seen, the initial efforts of the new composing machine manufacturers in type aesthetics had not always been successful.

Likewise, traditional type founders had abandoned their volume market in text faces for books and magazines, falling back on the production of advertising and novelty faces and the sale of printing and ancillary equipment in order to survive (taking with them many of the skills which had accrued over generations and which were seldom transmitted to outsiders). As mass production and consumption progressively took hold of Western economies, the rise of advertising further exacerbated the situation.

The private presses were in the business of making good books for a small discerning public. In addition, their ideal of typographical quality was essentially based on historical canons. The types which they commissioned were thus naturally rooted in the traditional letterforms used for books. However, the private presses were not only completely marginal in economic terms, but they were also swimming against the aesthetic tide, for print production was increasingly dominated by publicity and the illustrated press. How, then, did they come to have such an impact on 20th century typography?

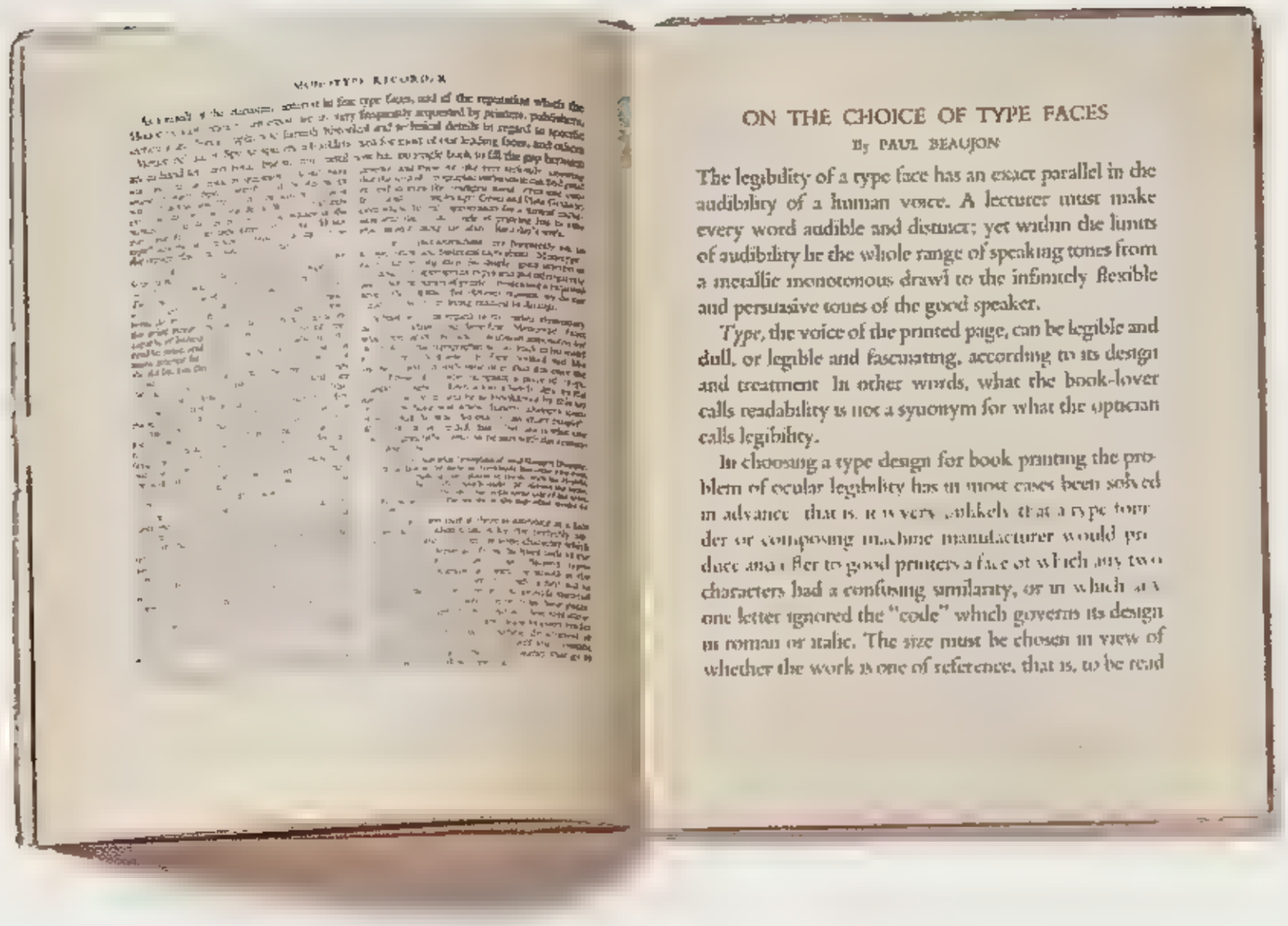
Paradoxically, one reason was the industrial and commercial success of Linotype and Monotype hot-metal composing machines. Even if display work was becoming increasingly important in design terms, straight text remained the bread and butter of the printing industry in terms of volume. Hot-metal composing machines thus provided an ideal field for the aesthetic and commercial application of private press inspired ideas concerning the design of good typefaces for continuous reading.

Monotype in particular would exploit this line of development to the maximum, thanks to the typographical flair of Stanley Morison and the promotional talents of Beatrice Warde who, together, established Monotype's reputation as a typographical leader. Morison was a vociferous advocate of the standards espoused by the private press movement. As historian and typographical advisor to the British Monotype Corporation (and to the Cambridge University Press) he was able to impose his opinions in an industrial context.[1]

Since the 1930s, the debate concerning typographical quality has thus been dominated by what might be called the *"Morison/Monotype doctrine"*: the idea that the success and longevity of typographical culture depends above all on the production of high-quality textfaces by individuals and companies who are determined and powerful enough to impose their vision of typographical progress on an unutterably materialistic and typographically indifferent world.

FILOSOFIA 16, 14, 10 AND 7 PT.

1 It should be added that the manufacturers of the new hot-metal composing machines also took advantage of the trend toward centralization and conglomerization at the end of the 19th century which left the type market in the hands of a small number of founders



ON THE CHOICE OF TYPE FACES

By PAUL BEAUJON

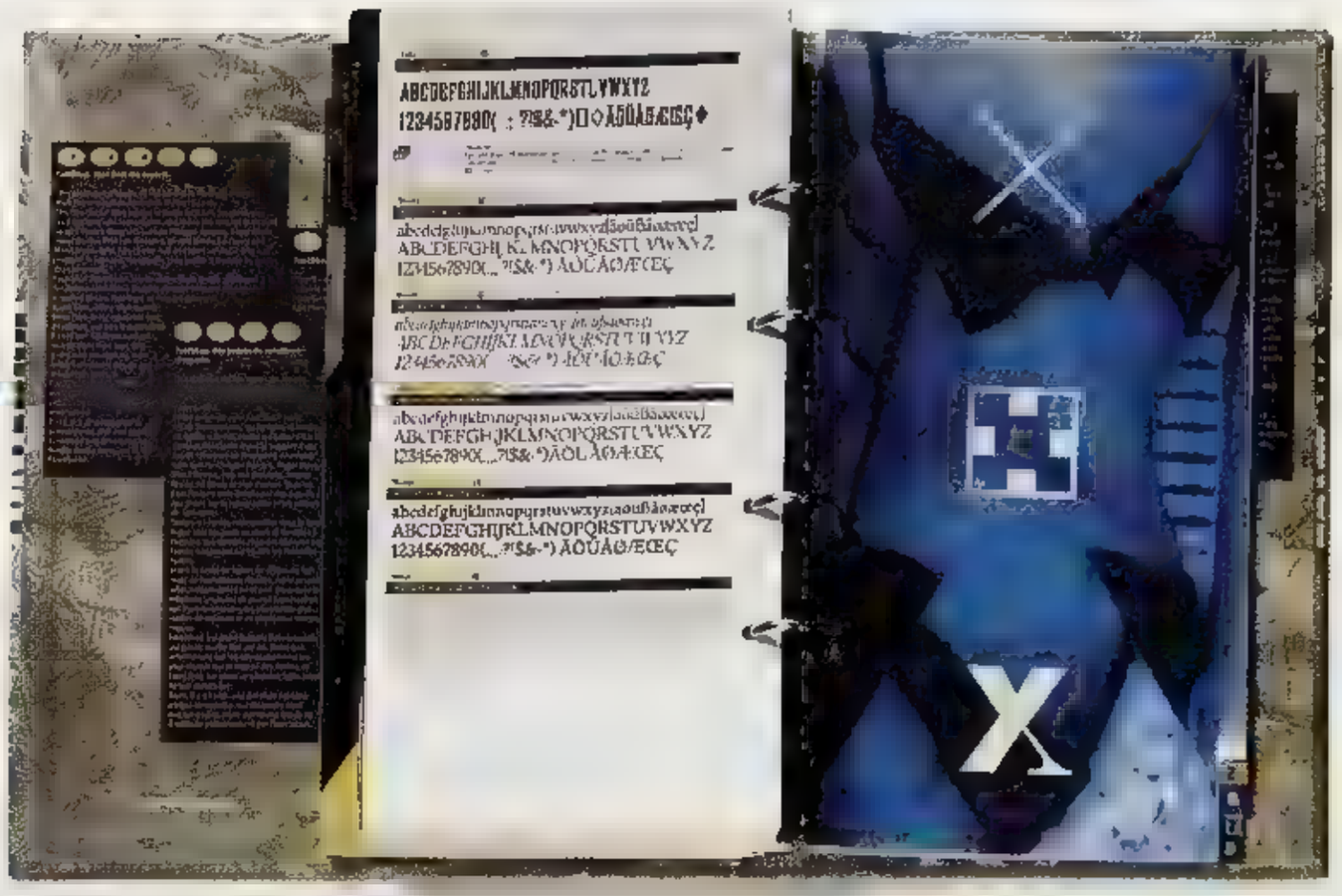
The legibility of a type face has an exact parallel in the audibility of a human voice. A lecturer must make every word audible and distinct; yet within the limits of audibility he the whole range of speaking tones from a metallic monotonous drawl to the infinitely flexible and persuasive tones of the good speaker.

Type, the voice of the printed page, can be legible and dull, or legible and fascinating, according to its design and treatment In other words, what the book-lover calls readability is not a synonym for what the optician calls legibility.

In choosing a type design for book printing the problem of ocular legibility has in most cases been solved in advance that is, it is very unlikely that a type founder or composing machine manufacturer would produce and offer to good printers a face of which any two characters had a confusing similarity, or in which any one letter ignored the "code" which governs its design in roman or italic. The size must be chosen in view of whether the work is one of reference, that is, to be read

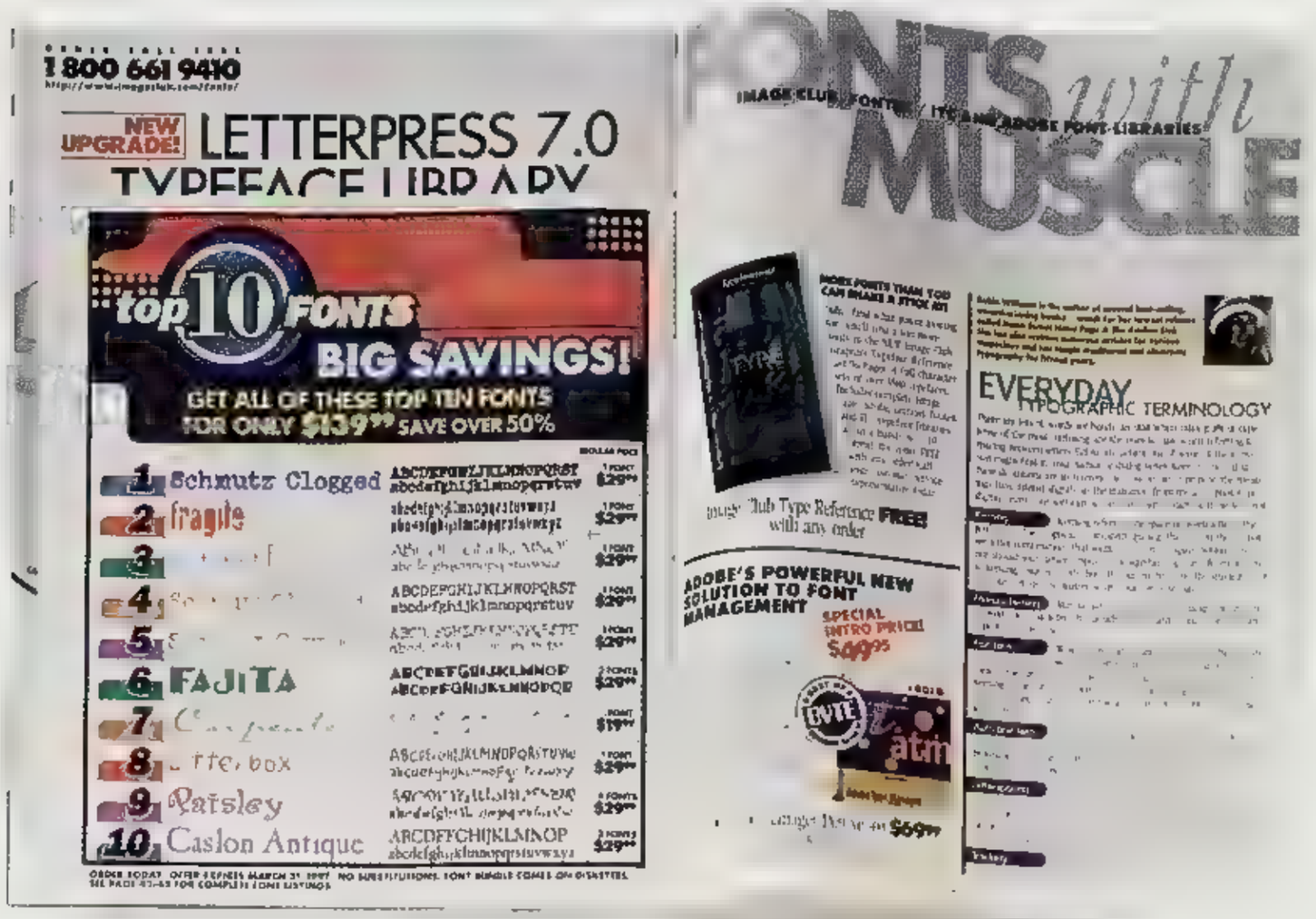
The *Monotype Recorder*
[illegible] Spring 1933 Volume XXXII
Published by the Monotype Corporation Limited
Article on right page written by editor Beatrice Ward
under her pseudonym Paul Beaujon

If we attach Morison's name to a state of mind which has dominated the typographical debate for well over half a century, it is because book typography, though shrinking as a market segment since the beginning of the century, has nevertheless remained the driving force of typographic values in areas far beyond its own field. And if we associate Morison's name with Monotype, it is because the latter not only set high standards for its own products but also led a campaign to improve the tastes and practices of working printers through its in-house magazine, the *Monotype Recorder*, in which articles by eminent typographical scholars were found side by side with the usual self promotional copy vaunting the merits of the firm's latest products. Thus Monotype became the standard against which all other composing machine manufacturers (hot metal and then photo) measured themselves. For over half a century it led the field in typographical terms, despite the fact that its main customer base—book production—restricted it to a much smaller market share than that of its principal competitor Linotype, whose machines were used for all types of text composition.



The *FontShop Catalog* 1991 Published by FontShop International
Designed by Alexander Branczyk, Pia Betton, Erik Spiekermann and Neville Brody Right panel design by Max Kisman

The *Image Club Software Catalog* March 1997 Published by Adobe Systems Inc



However, the essential feature of the *Morison/Monotype doctrine* is not so much the actual production of book faces (Monotype produced many highly successful faces which were not designed for use in books). Rather, it was the ideal of the perennial type form, the face which will launch a thousand copies and will still be in use a hundred years later—in other words, something like Times New Roman or Univers which would establish the international reputation of its designer and guarantee a regular income for the foundry that produced it. It is this ideal which has been steadily undermined by the increasingly widespread use of type design tools such as Ikarus and Fontographer.

From the standpoint of typeface markets, the decline of the *Morison/Monotype doctrine* is no more nor less than the breaking up of the oligarchy of the traditional type manufacturers. From an economic point of view, the *Morison/Monotype doctrine* is founded on the form of industrial organization which we call mass production, in which heavy initial design, manufacturing, and promotional costs are recouped through economies of scale and mass distribution.

In the light of the new structures of industrial organization which have emerged in the wake of the proliferation of highly flexible microcomputer-based tools, to what extent is the *Morison/Monotype doctrine* still applicable in a so-called postindustrial society? It could be argued that it has been rendered obsolete by the digital revolution and by the replacement of dedicated typesetting systems by standard hardware platforms. The fact that the typeface suppliers who traditionally dominated the typeface market no longer manufacture the machines on which their fonts are used has plunged them into crisis, or at least into a period of profound self-examination. It is indeed hard to imagine any single machine (i.e., computer) manufacturer occupying as commanding a position as Monotype did for half a century.

FILOSOFIA 36, 24, 18, 16 AND 12 PT

This argument has its limits however, for in spite of the advances of postmodern aesthetics and postindustrial economics, the mass-production model continues to play a dominant role in type face markets. As traditional type suppliers have foundered or been bought and restructured by industrial holding companies, the number of fonts sold each year by relative newcomers such as Adobe and Microsoft has risen vertiginously. Quantitatively, more fonts are sold today than at any time in the past. Similarly, as digital technology has paved the way to low cost, short-run production, the number of typefaces available on the market has increased relentlessly (though it is debatable whether most of these designs do more than decorate the founders' catalogs). Mass production remains alive and well in the typographical field, but it is no longer the only model.

If the *Morison/Monotype doctrine* has foundered it is because new technology has revealed the essential multiplicity of typographical models. The appeal which typographers of Stanley Morison's generation made to the canons of quality book production was a necessary stage in raising consciousness. But it was not the only means to this end. Linotype's "legibility group" of newspaper typefaces also made an important contribution to the debate, as did the important work done in the fields of signage and information design since 1945. Until recently, however, such fields were looked upon somewhat condescendingly as limited applications of the much more universal principles which book typography purportedly embodied.

Over the last ten years the typeface market has been fragmented by the emergence of new groups of typeface users (thanks to the microcomputer the general public is no longer as typographically indifferent as it once was) and by the emergence of a new breed of type founders. At one end of the spectrum, the truly mass-production sector (as exemplified by office software publishers) involves a relatively small number of type styles, many of which are of limited interest in terms of quality. At the other end, numerous small digital foundries have emerged to meet particular design needs or to develop specialized type applications. Thus the emergence of small type foundries and type distributors such as Emigre or FontShop is not simply an ephemeral offshoot of yet another avant-garde movement in type design. Much more importantly, it is the expression of a profound change in patterns of type face production and consumption. It is a *recognition* of the diversity of social uses of formal letterforms which microcomputers have made possible for the first time since Gutenberg invented movable type. It is also a long-overdue recognition that rigorous standards of type design are no longer the sole prerogative of book faces; it also indicates that printers and publishers are no longer the only people who take an interest in typographical matters. In the aftermath of the "fourth wave," traditional type suppliers are desperately trying to develop a new identity (and a new profitability) somewhere between mass production and niche marketing.

FILOSOFIA 12, 18 AND 10 PT

THE TEMPTATIONS OF TYPOTROPISM

Though good quality still costs money, typographers no longer have to invest in highly specialized machines as in the days of hot-metal or phototypesetting. Before the Mac no one in his or her right mind bought a composing machine unless he or she were going into industrial production (even at a modest level). Nobody bought a Linotype to do office stationery or a phototypesetter to typeset personal correspondence! The machines, with all their ancillary equipment, were cumbersome and expensive—as were the skills necessary to use them. It was simply cheaper to go to a printer.

With the advent of desktop publishing, the machines and a large part of the basic software used in typographical production became exactly the same as those used in any office or home. As a result, the field of what could be called typographical production has widened considerably, as has the range of products and social uses of the printed word (from personal to industrial production through every conceivable form of administrative, commercial, and promotional documentation). Similarly, as the notion of skill has slowly but surely ousted that of automation, the vertical structure of typographical markets has become ever more complex and now stretches from individual one-off productions (via the traditional range of administrative, commercial, and industrial products) to the most sophisticated virtual electronic media.

All this we already know. But given that nobody would in this day and age contest the fact that typographical production is no longer a hermetically closed sector of industrial (and cultural) production, why is it that no one seems inclined to draw the obvious conclusions, i.e., that the difference between good and bad typographers does not reside in the machines or the fonts which they have at their disposal, but rather in what they do with them? The corollary to this is that traditional type manufacturers and the industrial holding companies which control them can no longer rely on their commercial clout or marketing expertise to convince us that they are the natural guardians of typographical quality.

Is it because we are all suffering from what the Belgian typographer Fernand Baudin calls *"typotropism"*? Typotropism can be characterized as the tendency to forget that, when it comes to typographical quality, the letter (no matter how good it may be) is only half the story; the white space around it can be just as important. According to Baudin, typotropism is the typographical version of original sin—the unavoidable consequence of the invention of movable type by Gutenberg. For with movable type, the hitherto homogeneous writing process was doomed to dissolve into a series of fragmented specializations. Before Gutenberg, writers knew how to place letters and white space on a page. With letterpress printing, the author was separated from the production process which was entrusted to a growing number of specialists. The logical extension of this has been an exaggerated sense of the importance of indi-

FILOSOFIA 14, 10, 16 AND 14 PT

vidual letterforms at the expense of all the other factors which contribute to the making of a successful document. In his book *L'Effet Gutenberg* (Paris, 1994) Baudin asks why typotropism should still be so widespread today when the personal computer has recreated the conditions for the reintegration of the intellectual and productive aspects of writing. The phenomenon is all the more strange when we consider the number of talented typographers who have demonstrated over the centuries that a well-designed page can be made with the most ordinary materials; and when we consider the number of bad typographers who have failed to produce a decent job with even the finest typefaces.

Typographers are, of course, a very fickle lot. As Jeffery Keedy has written in *Emigre* no. 15, *"Whenever I start a new job and try to pick a typeface, none of the typefaces give me the voice I need. They just don't relate to my experiences in my life. They're about somebody else's experiences, which don't belong to me."* Typography is, of course, an innately fastidious activity if only because its raw material—text—is highly unstable and has to be constantly protected from inadvertent corruption. More important, the range of available typefaces is inherently dynamic because the cultural charge of letter forms has to evolve in response to changes in society.

It could also be argued, however, that there are more than enough typefaces in the Western world to satisfy every imaginable need and that the real problem is that very few people have a clue as to how to use them. In practice, any competent type user is capable of producing a wide variety of work of the highest quality by using a tiny portion of current typeface resources. And to return (at last) to the starting point of this article, the *real* problem is not the viability of type design as a profession or the profitability of digital type founding but the inadequate training both within the traditional typographical trades and in the schools and universities where the bulk of tomorrow's type users first learn to write with machines. At the risk of provoking great wailing and gnashing of teeth in certain quarters, one might well ask whether we really need so many typefaces and so many typeface designers? So long as there is no training worthy of the name (and little place for it in neoliberal economic thought), would it not be much better to forget about designing new faces, or at least stop treating type designers and their commercial paymasters as if they were an endangered species to be protected at all costs?

Instead of worrying about the currently chaotic state of typeface markets (chaotic from the point of view of traditional type manufacturers, that is), would it not be better to concentrate on developing a more responsible and critical attitude towards typographical education and the use of existing typographical resources?

MORE IS MORE

In the world of type, the end of one era

(that of the *Morison/Monotype doctrine* in this case) usually marks the beginning of another. For five centuries, the number of different kinds of printed products has steadily increased as civilization has become more and more complex. For the last half-millennium, we have been continuously inventing new forms of documents without ever entirely eliminating the old, resulting in a diversity of print markets which has grown in direct proportion to all the indicators of economic growth and social change. Can this situation continue in the face of electronic docu

FILOSOFIA 14, 10, 18, 30 AND 12 PT

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ments and information highways? The question is valid but is of little relevance, for the changes which have affected the graphic industries over the last ten years have demonstrated that typography is not dependent on paper-based documents for its survival and growth. Electronic documents and computer screens are raising a whole new set of urgent questions concerning letterforms, legibility, readability, and graphic design in general, as well as adding (yet again) to the already mind boggling range of existing typographical products.

This brings us back to the questions raised at the beginning of this article: why are there more typefaces in circulation now than ever before, and why are more people involved in what could be loosely termed "type design"? Viewed from a historical perspective, the answers to the first question are pretty obvious. The number of typefaces has increased because it has become relatively easy to produce a font using modern design tools and production methods. These days, a successful typeface design can recoup its costs in a relatively short time. Hot-metal faces required a much longer period to recover their initial production costs, if they ever did completely, given that slow sales were systematically penalized by heavy storage costs. In addition, the typeface market has literally exploded in the last ten years In the days of hot metal, a small printer might have possessed only half a dozen type families. In the 1970s, the average provincial phototypesetting firm offered maybe 20 type families (plus odd fonts picked up and paid for by particular jobs). Today, the most modest microcomputer user feels deprived if his or her word processing package does not offer a minimum of 50 fonts (plus their bold and italic versions), and the average commercial desktop publisher requires at least twice that many. As for type founders, they think nothing of offering a thousand-face type library on a CD-ROM.

The existence of so many typefaces today is not, however, entirely *gratuitous* for each design has its own voice and each type user his or her own individual manner of solving a given design problem. Furthermore, typographical documents offer a bewildering range of forms and functions and are consumed in an equally bewildering range of social and cultural contexts. As a result, "traditional" paper-based media still have a long way to go before they will exhaust the resources of formal letterforms. And electronic documents and computer screens, are generating a whole new set of demands on formal letterforms.

Thus old typefaces may go out of fashion but, thanks to digital technology, they no longer go definitively out of production. When they no longer sell and are not even useful for padding out a type founder's catalog or CD-ROM, they just go into storage. In the days of hot metal, the storage and maintenance of punches, patterns, matrices, and stock was a major headache—a problem which was largely but not completely solved when metal casting was replaced by photography. Nowadays, given the ease with which the algorithms used to generated alphabets can be stored, the conservation of old and new typefaces is, if not free, limited to the cost of a few meters of shelf space and a vigilant eye on the upward compatibility of computer operating systems. It is easy to see why the number of typefaces just keeps on growing.

Continued on page 49

FILOSOFIA 12, 9 5, 28 24 14 AND 12 PT


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Ottomat Book
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Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem.

[12/13 Point]

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Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta decima. Eodem modo typi, qui nunc nobis videntur parum clari, fiant sollemnes in futurum.

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Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem.

— [14/15 Point] —

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Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur muta tionem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta decima. Eodem modo typi, qui nunc nobis videntur parum clari, fiant sollemnes in futurum.

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Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem Investig

F

Mrs EAVES *Smart Ligatures*

ROMAN CAPS & *Italic* | LIGATUREMAKER™ APPLICATION

THE AARDVARK

Deconstructivist theorists

HERO GOGGLES

We be freeky and flippy

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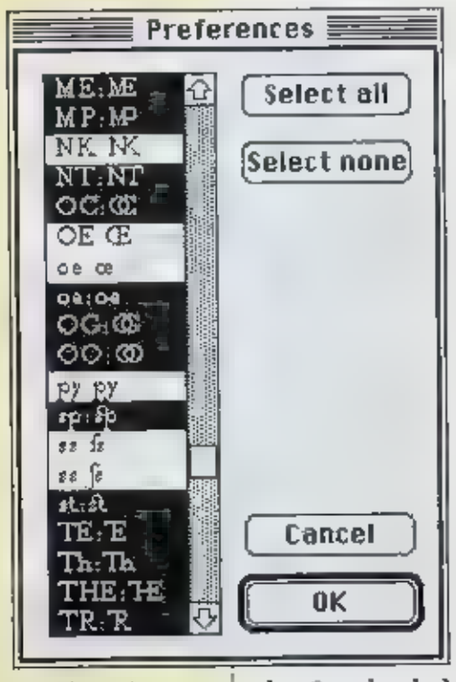
AMBIENT LAVA LAMP

Scruffy poetry sprees

THINK VANILLA

Affinity with happy gifts

Ligatures have several functions in the setting of type. Some ligatures are necessary to avoid the collision of particular letter combinations. For example, the spacing problem between the "f " and "i" characters can be resolved by replacing the pair with a separately designed "fi" ligature. While some ligatures have evolved from particular language needs or the limitations of particular type technologies others are artistic expressions that add a sense of customized uniqueness to the setting. In this way, the use of ligatures can emulate the contextual attention to detail of hand lettering reminiscent of the pre-print era. The joining of letters, of course, comes from our alphabet's roots in handwritten forms. When the alphabet was subsequently adapted to print in the form of movable type, it continued to include many ligatures. Eventually for the sake of expediency, all but the most necessary ligatures were dropped from the standard character set. Even today, the standard character set supported by digital font formats accommodates only the most common ligatures, fi fl, Æ, Œ, æ and œ. Therefore, making use of the 213 ligatures offered in the Mrs Eaves Ligatures sets can be a challenging typesetting task for longer passages of text. In answer to this, Emigre commissioned Just van Rossum of LettError to engineer a special application. The resulting Mrs Eaves LigatureMaker™ automates the process by replacing specified letter combinations with ligatures in selected text.



The preferences window allows for selective ligature replacement.

The initial release of Mrs Eaves already included some of the less common ligatures. Since then we've developed additional ligatures which are now available in the Mrs Eaves Ligatures sets, ranging from the common to the fanciful.

G

Filosofia

Filosofia Regular
7 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam, est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam process is dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta decima. Eodem modo typi, qui nunc nobis videntur parum clari, fiant sollemnes in futurum

Filosofia Italic
7/7 point

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Filosofia Bold
7/7 point

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Filosofia Regular
10/10 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta decima. Eodem modo typi, qui nunc nobis videntur parum clari, fiant sollemnes in futurum.

Filosofia Italic
10/10 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta decima. Eodem modo typi, qui nunc nobis videntur parum clari, fiant sollemnes in futurum. Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum

Filosofia Bold
10/10 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta decima. Eodem modo typi, qui nunc nobis videntur parum clari, fiant sollemnes

Filosofia Regular

Filosofia Italic

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seen

Top: Matrix Regular and Matrix Bold on posters advertising the release of the new B.I G. album, Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, CA
Bottom: Matrix Extra Bold (custom outlined) on the football jerseys of the Baltimore Ravens



J

Matrix

Designed by Zuzana Licko

Matrix Book 9/10 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam, est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta decima

Matrix Regular 9/10 point

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Matrix Bold 9/10 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima.

Matrix Extra Bold 36 point

Humanitatis

Matrix Narrow 36 point

Humanitatis

Matrix Wide 36 point

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Matrix Inline Extra Bold 36 point

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Matrix Inline Script 36 point

Humanitatis

Matrix Script Book 9/10 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui se quitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta decima.

Matrix Script Regular 9/10 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta decima.

Matrix Script Bold 9/10 point

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Matrix Small Caps Book 9/10 point

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Matrix Small Caps Regular 9/10 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta

Matrix Small Caps Bold 9/10 point

Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere melius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudinum lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per saecula quarta decima et quinta

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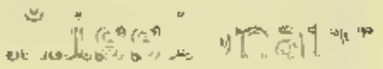
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[ ] { } Ä Å Ç É Ñ Ö Ü á a ã a ã å ç é è ê ë í ì î ï ñ ó ò ô ö õ u u û u y † ¢ £ • ß Æ Ø ® © ™ ‰ ¥ µ ð æ ø « » ¿ ¡ ƒ . . À Â Ô Œ œ - — " " ' '
fi fl Â Ê A Ë È Í Î Ï Ì Ó Ô Ò Ú Û Ù Ÿ I 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

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A A B B C C D D E E F F G G H H I I J J K K L L M M N N O O P P Q Q R R S S T T U U V V W W X X Y Y Z Z ! ? " ¢ $ & ' ( ) .. . , - . / : ; < — > at (\ )
€ Rp Á À Â Ä Ã Å Ç É È Ê Ë Í Ì Î Ï Ñ Ó Ò Ô Ö Õ Š Ú Ù Û Ü Ÿ † ¥ µ Æ Ø « » ¿ ¡ ƒ ... Œ — — " " ' ' a b d e i l m n o r s t © ℗ ® ✗ ✉ ✂ ❨ ✿ → ← ↓ ↑ 1/4
1/2 3/4 1/8 3/8 5/8 7/8 1/3 2/3 I 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 / I 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 ff fi fl ffi ffl I 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

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Superior and Inferior Numerals: use for footnotes or to construct custom fractions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 / I 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

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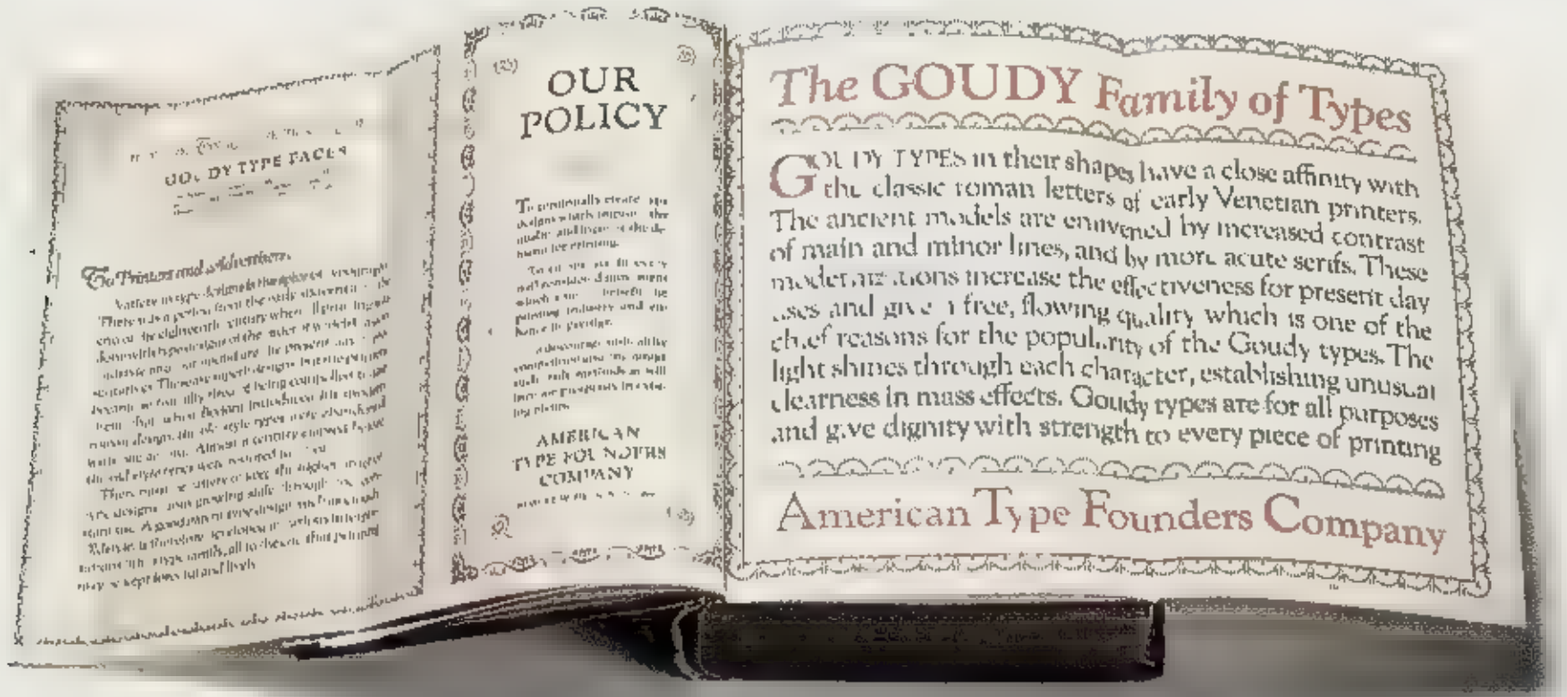
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The second question – why are more people involved in type design – is slightly more difficult to answer because there is no real definition of a type designer in the age of PostScript, desktop publishing, and numerically controlled machine tools, which make it all impossible to mark the point at which type design stops and lettering begins. Up until the mid-19th century it was easy to distinguish the type designer from the letterer because they used quite different tools and developed their designs for different markets. The type designer was in fact the punch-cutter, that rare creature who cut letterforms by hand on the end of a bar of steel and who adjusted their proportions by eye for each type size from 6 to 72 point or beyond. The letterer, on the other hand, worked principally with a pen, brush or chisel. Punch-cutting was an extremely specialized activity and punch-cutters jealously protected the secrets of their trade from over-curious colleagues or outsiders. Letterers were much more common and the field was much easier to enter. The result of the punch-cutter's work was, from the printer's point of view, a standardized, off-the-peg product in contrast to lettering which tended to be made to measure



The *Specimen Book and Catalog* 1923
Published by American Type Founders Company

The introduction of the pantographic punch-cutting machine in the late 19th century broke the stranglehold of the hand punch-cutter and opened the way for the type designer in the modern sense of the term: men such as the Bentons (father and son) who designed typefaces for the American Type Founders Company (ATF) on paper before transferring each letter onto a pattern plate using the pantograph (the pattern plate was then used to produce a punch or a matrix as required). Typeface designers like the Bentons also sifted through the many designs which type founders such as ATF received every year from a wide variety of letterers and signwriters hoping to see their work immortalized in lead. This practice of having in-house designers backed up by freelancers from a wide variety of fields continued through the first half of the 20th century. It was only after the second world war that independent type designers began to seriously make their mark (Frederic Goudy having been the notable exception to this rule at the beginning of the century). Continued on page 51

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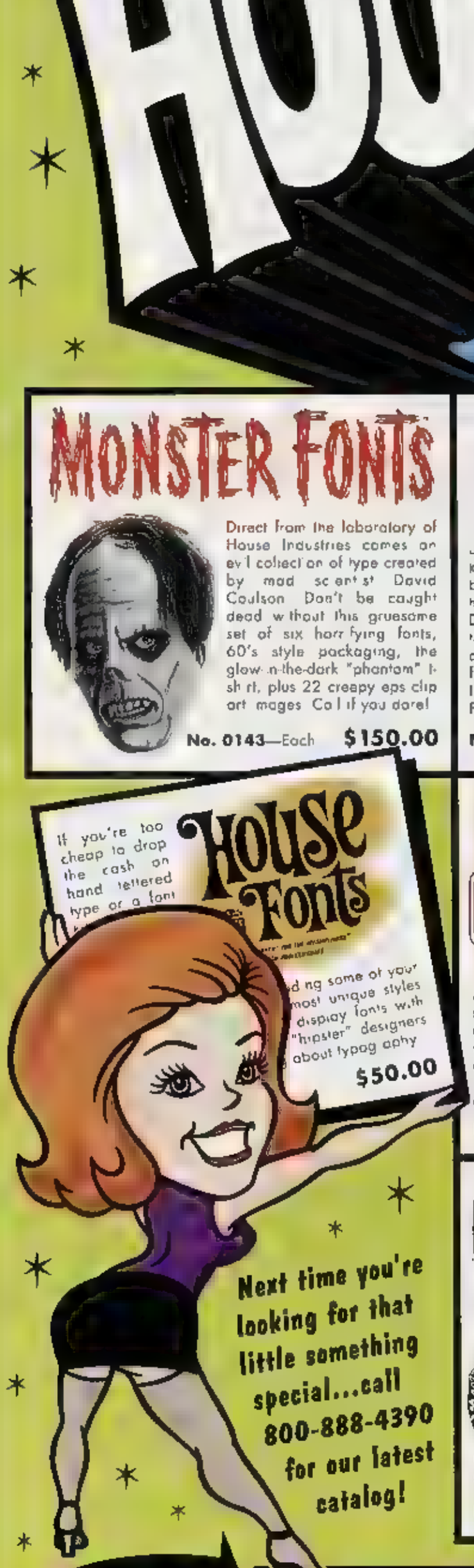


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In the wake of the breaking up

of the Monotype/Linotype duopoly by the manufacturers of the new phototypesetting machines and of the continued decline of traditional type foundries, the number of typeface suppliers grew rapidly during the 1960s, making it increasingly easy for independent type designers to "play the market," producing typefaces for hot-metal and photocomposing machines, for manufacturers of dry transfer lettering, and from 1971 on, for International Typeface Corporation (ITC) which licensed its designs to all comers, including computer manufacturers.

The rise of the independent type designer

coincided with that of the graphic designer after the second world war. It also coincided with a progressive fragmentation of the printing industry as traditional vertically integrated firms split into autonomous production units: phototypesetters, process houses, printers, finishers, *etcetera*. Curiously, the fragmentation of the printing industry took place at a time when the information market was becoming increasingly dominated by large transnational communications groups for whom type-related activities were but a small part of their overall business. Even more curious is the fact that there has been a renewed trend toward vertical integration in recent years, at the very moment when telecommunications networks and microcomputers have opened the way for new dispersed, flexible forms of working which allows smaller production units.

Who, then, is today's type designer?

Someone who *designs* type or someone who *lives by designing* type? If the former is a dime-a-dozen thanks to the personal computer and programs like Fontographer, the latter is almost as rare as they ever were. As in so many fields of typographic activity, we shouldn't confuse the tool with the application. In the age of cheap, powerful computers and software, the tool tells us nothing about its use, nor does it tell us anything about the complex interplay of skills and economic constraints that lie

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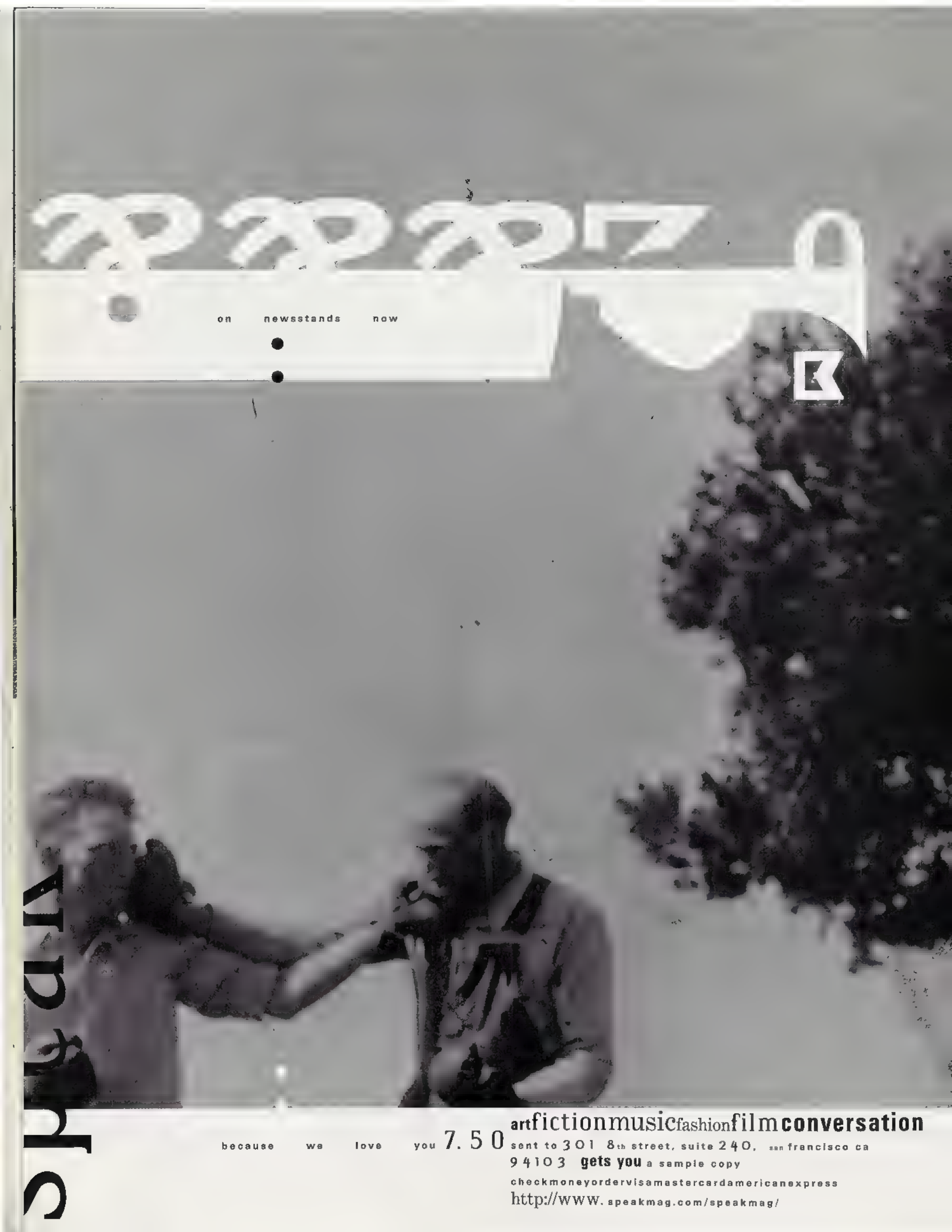
at the heart of each form of commercial typographical activity. Just as the term "desktop publishing" has come to encompass an extremely diverse and hierarchical range of individual, administrative, and commercial document production (including traditional typesetting as it used to be carried out within the strict confines of the printer's workshop), so has "type design" grown to become a blanket term applied to a wide range of once disparate products, each with a specific function in terms of communication. And if the demise of the *Morison/Monotype doctrine* tells us anything, it is that we should beware of blanket terms, for the one constant factor in the evolution of the "printed word" since Gutenberg is the multiplication of the forms and functions not only of printed products but of typographical production. And this trend is bound to accelerate with the advent of the computer as the primary media for transmitting textual information. Just as the book face is no longer the sole model for the design of typefaces for continuous reading, so, too, must the different applications of type for noncontinuous reading be clear. More specifically, we have to avoid confusing functional criteria with value judgments. Designing book faces is a no more noble activity than designing a typeface for a telephone directory or a computer screen. A typeface designed for a newspaper is not inherently better than one designed for the most outrageous forms of display advertising. Similarly, the notion of typographical quality crosses the traditional frontiers established by a complex cultural hierarchy of products. A good postmodern novelty face is better than a badly reinterpreted Garamond. The emergence of a wide range of highly specialized sectors within typography since the second world war is the concrete expression of the breakdown of the hegemony of book typography that has persisted since printers first started to systematize their know-how in printing manuals at the end of the 17th century.

As soon as we start to distinguish the various functional criteria involved in type design (continuous or noncontinuous reading, legibility, medium, novelty value, target market, shelf life, *etcetera*.), we will find ourselves returning to something which strangely resembles the traditional distinction between type designers and letterers. Just as the majority of office workers, technicians, academics, and many other assorted desktop publishers are not doing the same job or producing the same product as the skilled compositor or designer, so too is it impossible to describe all Fontographer users as type designers, because designing off-the-peg typefaces for widespread use is but a small part of their professional activity. The confusion between *graphic designers* who manipulate individual letters or small groups of letters and *type designers* who devote their careers to producing new typefaces is the result of an over-identification with the machine (or in this case, the computer program) and of the eternal search for more "noble" job titles. In the 60s and 70s the fragmentation of print production and the increasing polarization of conceptual and manual tasks allowed the humble commercial artist to go upmarket and become a "graphic designer." In the wake of the Macintosh revolution, the once exclusive title of type designer has been appropriated by anyone who has ever had a hand in producing a commercially distributed font

In reality, however, little has changed, despite the immense impact of computerization on type design techniques. Like the lettercarvers, sign writers, and designers of all sorts who occasionally supplied designs to type foundries in the days of hot metal, today's graphic designers are turning their hand to type design from time to time. It is true that logo design and signage are close to typeface design in conceptual terms. In commercial terms, however, the two worlds are galaxies apart for typeface production is controlled not by designers but by manufacturers and distributors. Profound technological changes and new approaches to the design (to the idea even) of formal letterforms may have been called into question and even destabilized the established typographical order. Type markets, however, are conditioned by a complex set of economic factors whose force lies in their ability to evolve in the light of social and cultural changes. We may well be in a situation of permanent technological revolution, but does this rule out the possibility of finding a new stable model of industrial organization? Digital technology undoubtedly changes the rules of the game, but what logic governs the new rules? Are we just slipping into total industrial and commercial chaos (i.e., there is no fixed logic), or are the profound changes currently taking place a prelude to a new conception of typographical production and typeface markets? Total industrial chaos seems just about as unlikely as the threatened collapse of the quality typeface market. There are very few if any examples in history of permanently unstable states of economic organization. On the other hand, there are any number of examples of radically unstable states leading to new forms of organization. If chaos there is, it is in the modern scientific sense of the term—to provide an analogy like the random local turbulence in a river which does not prevent the river from following its larger, normal, more or less predictable, course. Instability should not be confused with the inherently dynamic nature of all economic (and typographic) activity.

Alan Marshall is a Scottish ex-printer with a Phd on the history of phototypesetting and now shares his time between writing for various European magazines and acting as historical advisor to the Museum of Printing in Lyons

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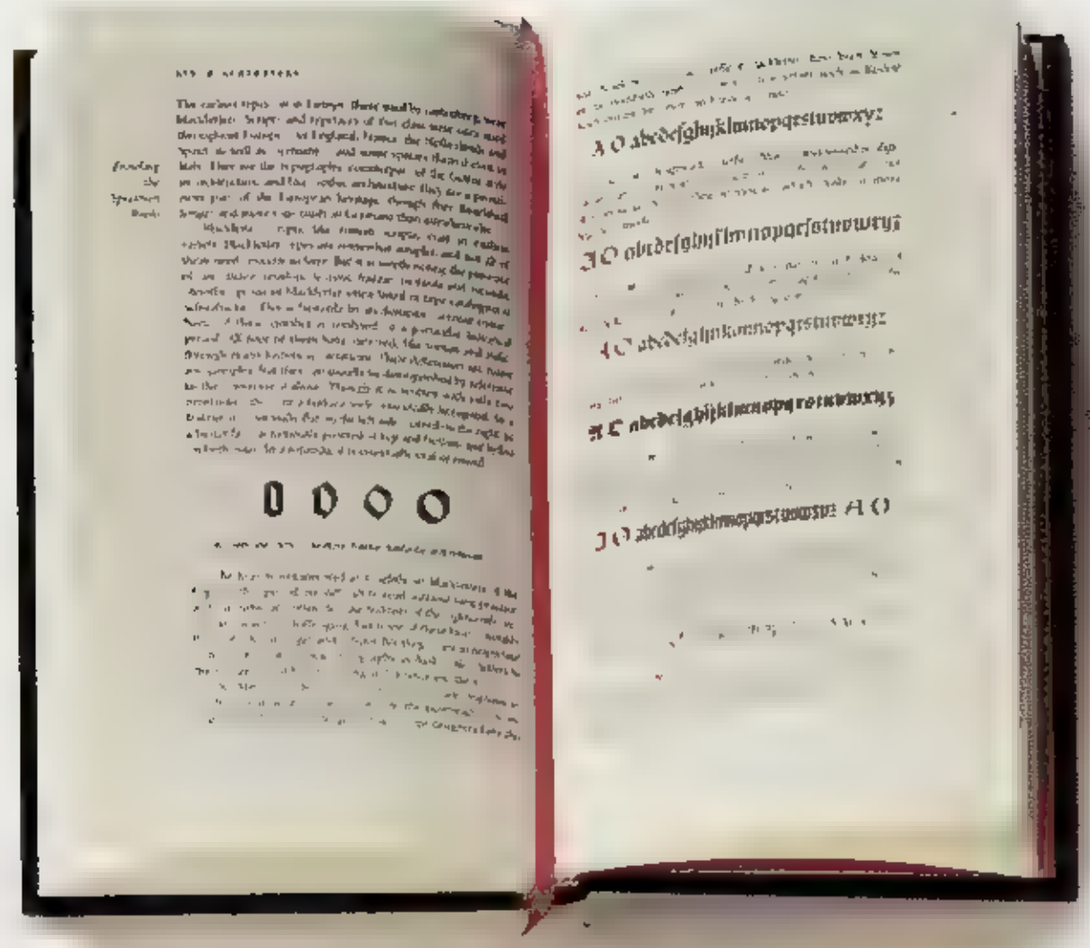
By Jonathan Hoefler

If there is a Holy Grail of typography it is surely the Omniscient Typeface Classification System, which will organize and index the complete typographical output of mankind. Countless individuals have set to the task of developing such a thing: printer-scholar Theodore Low deVinne, historian A.F. Johnson, critic Beatrice Warde, educator Alexander Lawson, writer Robert Bringhurst, and scores of professional organizations. I suspect that every typophile who has ever spent more than ten minutes trying to locate an obscure typeface in a poorly organized specimen book secretly dreams of devising the ultimate system by which typefaces are classified.

I must confess that I don't share my colleagues' fascination with this challenge. Whether something is a humanist sans serif or a neo-grotesque seems largely irrelevant in light of current typography, where the motivation to create new typefaces has been transcended by the drive to invent new kinds of typefaces. Whether this is an artistic endeavor or an imperative of the marketplace is debatable, but it has remained a consistent theme in typography for nearly two centuries. Editors of type specimen books who don't know where to file Remedy or Hard Times should take heart: a freakish design of 1815 was so vexing to compositors that they ultimately resorted to giving it its own designation. What subsequent generations referred to alternately as the *Egyptian*, *Doric*, *Ionic*, or *Antique*, history now remembers as the first *Sans Serif*.

This is not to suggest that the development of a classification system is futile but rather, that it is an infinitely complex task that requires the sensitivity of numerous disciplines—typography being only one among them. Attempts at typographic scholarship have long been impeded by the difficulties of describing typefaces, let alone organizing them. Where biologists have the benefit of the Linnæan system for comparing *Homo Sapiens* to *Homo Erectus*, and librarians can be certain that even as-yet unimagined volumes on architectural technique will be found under Dewey 692 (i.e., building construction practices), typographers have only the vaguest standardized terms for describing how Caslon differs from Janson. A taxonomy for type, if it were comprehensive, adaptable, correctable, expandable, generally accessible yet infinitely refined, would be of immense use to anyone connected with letters. If it chronicled the cultural, aesthetic, technological, and literary factors that have influenced type

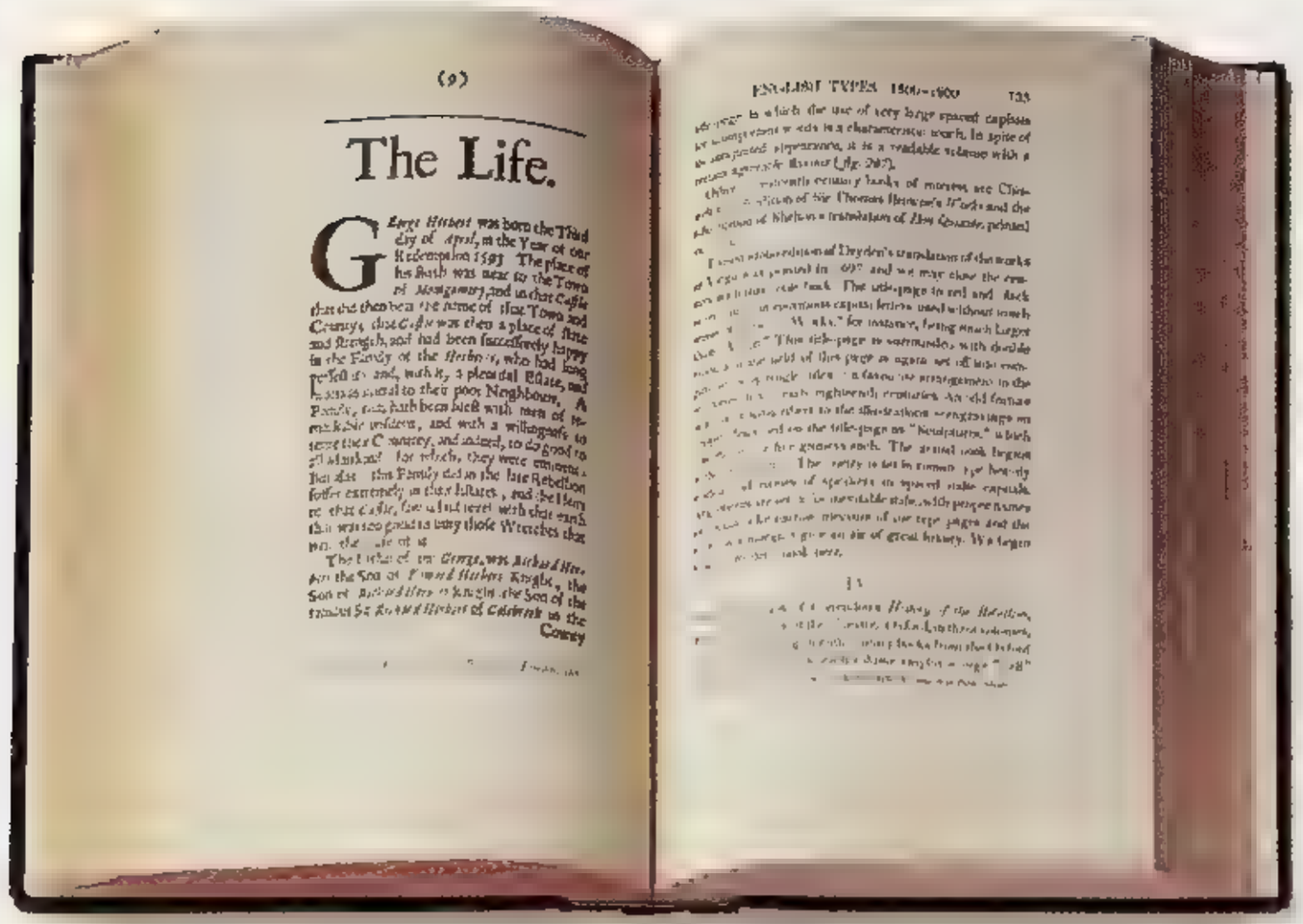


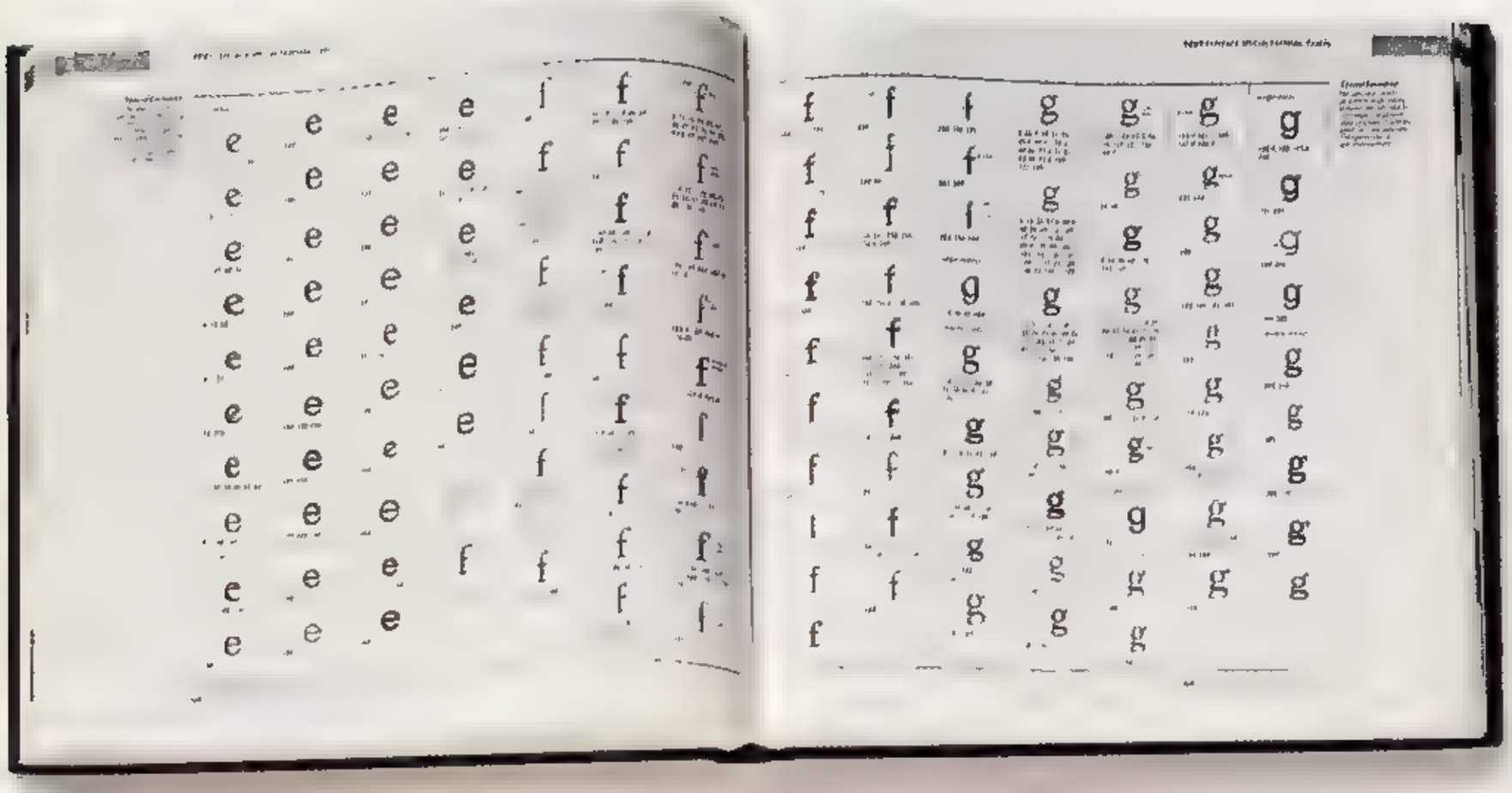


Nineteenth Century Ornamental Typefaces by Nicolete Gray
Published by University of California Press, 1976.

The Elements of Typographic Style by Robert Bringhurst
Published by Hartley & Marks, 1992.

On Classifying Type





Printing Types: Their History, Forms, and Use by Daniel Berkeley Updike
Published by Harvard University Press, 1927

Rookledge's International Typefinder by Christopher Perfect & Gordon Rookledge.
Published by Frederic C. Beil, 1983.

On Classifying Type

design—instead of postulating a neat progression of styles, implying an uncomplicated evolution—it might approach a more faithful record of the rich and complex history of typography. But the timeworn attempt to find a single best way to organize typefaces remains a hopeless pursuit: like asking "What's the best way to drive across the United States?" it anticipates a simple response to a complex issue.

The Central Lettering Record

A research team at the Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design in London has recently taken up the challenge to build a better system, as part of an ambitious project to extend the resources of the *Central Lettering Record*. The Record, as its name suggests, is an archive of lettering of all varieties: as distinguished from typography, which refers exclusively to the study of printing types, lettering subsumes a host of related disciplines, each of which brings its own visual vocabulary to bear upon the shape of letters. The Record includes studies of epigraphy (stonecutting), paleography and calligraphy (handwriting, in varying degrees of formality), architectural lettering, and modern commercial signage in a number of materials. There are letters in neon, plywood, vinyl, and vacuform plastic—media which have yet to engender their own fields of formal study.

The interest in lettering inspired by Edward Johnston early this century began to wane by the 1950s, when British design educators started to take an increasing interest in modernism. To counter the declining interest in non-typographic lettering and to provide an archive for their students at the Central School of Arts and Crafts (later partnered with Saint Martins to become the Central Saint Martins College), Nicolete Gray and Nicholas Biddulph began to amass a collection of alphabetic artifacts and photographs which now forms the core of the Central Lettering Record. After a period of some disuse, a renewed interest in the Record has prompted both its reorganization and its expansion to include typographic developments of the past decade. In connection with this ambitious project, a research group within the college is working to develop a CD-ROM on the history of typography, which will present both new and old typefaces in the context of the Record's well-developed collection of typographic artifacts.

See page 64-65

At last year's meeting of the Association Typographique Internationale in The Hague, Ed McDonald, Eric Kindel, and Catherine Dixon of Central Saint Martins presented a preliminary version of the CD-ROM. While the project has undergone considerable changes in the past six months—including a seismic overhaul of the classification system that had been introduced in the winter 1995 issue of *Eye*—both the architecture of the system and its user interface represent a unique and refreshing

approach to the documentation of type history. Perhaps more impressive than the work as it stands today, is its potential for future scholarship, which suggests that when complete, the CD will serve as a comprehensive review of more than five centuries of typography. While the CD itself remains a work in progress, the process by which this vast collection has been edited and organized already serves as an interesting study of the challenges facing the typographic archivist.

Where History Begins

The history of typography as conventionally told begins with Johannes Gutenberg and his celebrated 42-line Bible, printed circa 1455. However, current scholarship reminds us that Gutenberg is preceded by at least eight centuries of printing in the Far East demanding that this discussion be framed as the history of typography in the West, or more precisely, the history of European typefaces manufactured in the manner of Gutenberg. Ignoring for a moment the blackletter script after which Gutenberg patterned his types (because our discussion is about type, not calligraphy), we might proceed safely to the topic of major innovations in type, as they appear in the timeline, for almost ten years. The traditional next stop after Gutenberg is the work of the Italian humanists in the late 1460s, which culminated in Nicolas Jenson's Roman of 1470 (which we know through countless revivals, including Centaur and Adobe Jenson). The types of this period show the sudden influence of the humanist miniscule, a style of handwriting which took hold as part of the broader influence of secular humanism in the late 15th century. This form of letter might be thought of as the last evolutionary stage of the Carolingian miniscule, a style advanced by Charlemagne in the 8th century, representing an attempt to consolidate the many kinds of regional handwriting used throughout the Holy Roman Empire—resisting this excursion into a discussion of politics and script, let's continue with Jenson's type and its many merits.

See Bruce Rogers's Centaur on page 15 and 65

Aside from being attractive, Jenson's type is unique in its approach to lettering, which involved reconciling the two alphabets of the ancient world, the majuscule and the miniscule. Majuscules are the letters of antiquity, familiar to us through architectural inscriptions and the typefaces based on them, such as Adobe's Trajan. Miniscules are a sort of shorthand letter, handwritten forms indirectly descended from the majuscules and akin to our modern lowercase. Jenson successfully reconciled these two different alphabets by rendering the shapes of the miniscule in the style of the majuscule, taking written forms and remaking them in an eloquent vocabulary borrowed from inscriptions featuring stems, hairlines, and serifs. In so doing, Jenson and his Venetian cohorts cemented a typographic relationship which persists as a

familiar if invisible dichotomy, that of the uppercase and lowercase. A broader discussion of Jenson's innovations would include a survey of how inscriptional lettering changed under the Roman Republic and how changes in media forced the evolution of these letters into the quadrata, rustica, and uncial scripts which ultimately informed the Carolingian miniscule—but this is really the province of epigraphers, paleographers, and semioticians.

And so it goes, proceeding in many directions at once. Even in its infancy, type history is the confluence of many histories, and cross-pollination between these different areas of development only multiply as history advances. By the 19th century, when the dominant letter styles appear in many media, the lines of influence become impossible to chart. In *Nineteenth Century Ornamented Typefaces*, Nicolete Gray discusses lettering of a style she terms "English Vernacular," describing not only printing types but painted letters on shop fasciae, incised letters on monuments, and cast-iron letters on gravemarkers—never concluding that any of these examples is singularly supreme. By the 20th century, when the design of typefaces is commonly informed by literary and artistic influences which are decidedly outside the realm of typography, it becomes impossible to classify typefaces by their historical position alone. Type history invariably demonstrates that its exemplars, if not all of its participants, occupy the crossroads of many historical themes, none of which are fully within the scope of the study of printing types. The problem of when history begins is thus complicated by the larger question of what history includes.

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One Man's Language

With the understanding that typographic history is more than the history of type, we may better appreciate the approach taken by the Central Lettering Record, which presents a holistic view of lettering by making frequent excursions into related fields. Although this approach presents a more integrated view of type history, it is not without its own difficulties.

The technical terms specific to any area of study are likely to evidence their own biases, and the collision of many disparate vocabularies inevitably introduces ambiguities. A term as seemingly neutral as *Roman*, for example, even divorced from its geographical, national, historical, and political meanings, is fraught with ambiguity: to a typographer it means "upright types," but in orthography it denotes the Latin alphabet, and to calligraphers it describes a style of lettering peculiar to the 15th century. Sometimes terms specific to typography have multiple or even contrary meanings, leading to such delightful oxymorons as Serif Gothic and Times Roman Italic. The terms *Antique*, *Gothic*, and *Old English* are among typography's most widely used

and, entertainingly, also the most convoluted: *Antique* can mean a slab serif (Antique No. 3), a sans serif (Antique Olive), a humanist book face (Zapf Antiqua), or simply anything that looks old (Caslon Antique). Similarly, *Gothic* can refer to a sans serif (Franklin Gothic), or a blackletter (Totally Gothic), or occasionally both (Gothic Gothic). *Old English* is a hornet's nest, best avoided altogether.

Terminology also shows its roots. The very words used to describe the inscription on the Trajan Column might betray the concerns of a stonemason, an architect, a geologist, a lapidary, or a type designer, since the specialized vocabulary used by any profession is inevitably colored by particular areas of interest. The language typographers use to discuss non-typographic artifacts is no exception, as seen in the terms adopted by the Central Lettering Record: for example, *Augustan*, *Rustic*, *Tuscan*, and *Wedge* are among the stylistic groupings used to organize its collection of inscriptional photographs. Although these terms were developed to highlight a specific area of interest, even they are prone to confusing many lines of inquiry: *Augustan* is a historical marker, indicating those letters made in the style popularized under Cæsar Augustus (27 BC – AD 14); *Rustic*, divorced from its adjectival meaning, is a paleographic term which describes a particular style of handwriting; *Tuscan* is a term coined by 19th-century typographers to describe several genera of ornamented printing types; *Wedge*, though the least colorful of the lot, is the only term to describe letters on a purely visual level.

Apples, Oranges

The conflation of historical, technical, and formal terms is a common problem with typeface classification systems, seen especially in the scheme adopted by the British Standards Institute in 1958, and revised in 1967. For instance, while its *Slab Serif* and *Lineale* categories are purely visual, *Garalde* is a historical denomination (a synthesis of Garamond and Aldus), and its *Script* category takes into account the intention of the design, for it includes only "typefaces which imitate writing." Other systems muddle things further by expanding their criteria to include usage, such as the DIN (Deutsche Industrie Norman) classification which subdivides *Classical Styles* into four sub-sections, three of them chronological (early, late and modern) and the fourth reserved for typefaces designed for newspapers. The situation gets worse with systems that include geographical designations, like those which maintain a distinction between *Dutch Old Styles* and *English Old Styles*, without ever elaborating on these groups' taxonomic differences. Much of this is sheer jingoism and can be largely attributed to Daniel Berkeley Updike and his seminal *Printing Types: Their History, Forms, and Use*, a standard desk reference on type history since its publication in 1922. Despite its usefulness,

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Updike's scholarship is marred by extraordinary prejudices at every turn. Without exception, every achievement in three centuries of Dutch typefounding is somehow ascribed to the influence of the French (with whom Updike is inexplicably enamored), while the Dutch are portrayed in shockingly racist stereotypes: Plantin, Van Dijck, and the Elzevirs are commended for their shrewdness, their diligence, their thrift. Updike spits about the mediocrity of "a rugged little Dutch type," a typeface which is praised earlier in the edition where it is properly identified as the work of Frenchman Robert Granjon. This is par for the course in Updike.

Most typeface classification systems attempt a purely historical approach, categorizing typefaces according to the time of their genesis. The 18th-century types of Van Dijck and Caslon share many characteristics and are commonly collected as *Old Styles*. Bodoni and Didot's types of a century later are distinctly different and are designated *Modern*. Between these extremes are the types of John Baskerville and others, conveniently labeled *Transitional*. Aside from the obvious problem that compartmentalized systems demand rigidity, such classifications distort the historical record by equating chronology with typographic style. This becomes especially awkward in a discussion of 19th-century types, when entire categories of type develop coevally. Immediately following the period during which the Modern style flourished, a number of styles developed simultaneously, including sans serifs and slab serifs. The category that is listed directly after Modern in a classification system might understandably be mistaken as the next evolutionary step, even if this is not really the case.

Assigning types to discrete time periods also intimates that historical styles are visual explorations which have long since been completed. As a result, such systems are utterly unable to cope with typefaces of the late 20th century which are only incidentally related to historical styles. This invariably leads to confusion: typefaces of vastly different construction are corralled under a single heading (*Slab Serif* includes 19th-century Egyptians as well as 1974 Lubalin Graph), modern designs not explicitly designed in any historical style are grouped with the oldies (Gerard Unger's Swift typeface of 1985 is considered a *Garalde*), and designs which don't fit any of the molds are summarily expelled. Not all the exiles are freaks, as can be gathered from any type specimen book which includes special designations like *Twentieth-Century Romans*, a questionable grouping usually included for the express purpose of accommodating Times Roman.

Much of the scramble to organize typefaces has come from type manufacturers, since commercial typefounding brings a special urgency to the question of how typefaces are listed. No discussion of classification would therefore be complete without at least a little revue of some of the more colorful developments in the private sector. Bitstream's approach is rather ecumenical, giving equal weight to sans serifs and "typefaces adapted from typewriters and daisy-wheel printers," among other

comprehensive categories (although things take a turn for the worse in category 15, where "typefaces outside the typographic norm" are ghettoized as *Exotic*.) Letraset forecloses the discussion with their *Graphic* category, which warehouses some two-thirds of the faces in its library. The FontShop's FontFont range has recently been reorganized along conceptual lines, bringing to typography an updated version of the nine muses: *Amorphous, Destructive, Geometric, Handwritten, Historic, Intelligent, Ironic, Pi & Illustrations,* and *Typographic*. (Note that a typeface cannot be both Historic and Intelligent, and that only some typefaces get to be Typographic.) Perhaps it was inevitable that the beloved Dewey decimal system would be interpreted typographically, as David A. Mundie has done with *A Field Guide to Type Classification*, published on the Internet. Beginning with standard morphological differences (serifs vs. sans), Mundie provides subdivisions for progressively subtler typographic distinctions, right on past several decimal points to an almost fractal level of refinement. The result is that Univers Black, which Adrian Frutiger outfitted with the workaday number 75, is designated: "14.4.3.4.1.2.2.2.2.2, R flag roman [498]."

http://ivory.lm.com/~mundie/Typography/Faces.html

Horizons

In *The Elements of Typographic Style,* Robert Bringhurst outlines an interesting approach to type classification, which lays the foundation for a more sensitive conservancy of type history. Recognizing that the period of a typeface's development will reflect not only its style but its manufacturing process, Bringhurst introduces two complementary scales for classifying type. The first is a series of artistic movements, borrowed from the fine arts: Renaissance, Baroque, Neoclassical, and so on. These labels ignore the vagaries of x-heights and serif designs, and instead attempt a reference to the artistic circumstances relevant to each period in typographic history. Intersecting this system is a second scale, which indicates the original form of a typeface: foundry type for hand composition, hot metal type for machine composition, phototype, or digital fonts. By classifying typefaces under both methods, a system emerges which allows for the comparison of visually related designs without overtly suggesting relationships between them. Therefore Fournier's types of the 1740s might be stylistically grouped with their 1926 interpretation for machine casting, Monotype Fournier, as well as Fleischman's No. 65 (1738), not to mention more recent designs that are only arguably their descendants, such as Matthew Carter's Charter (1987). By locating history along perpendicular axes denoting artistic and technological concerns, Bringhurst dispenses with the usual laundry-list approach and hints at something far more compelling to emerge.

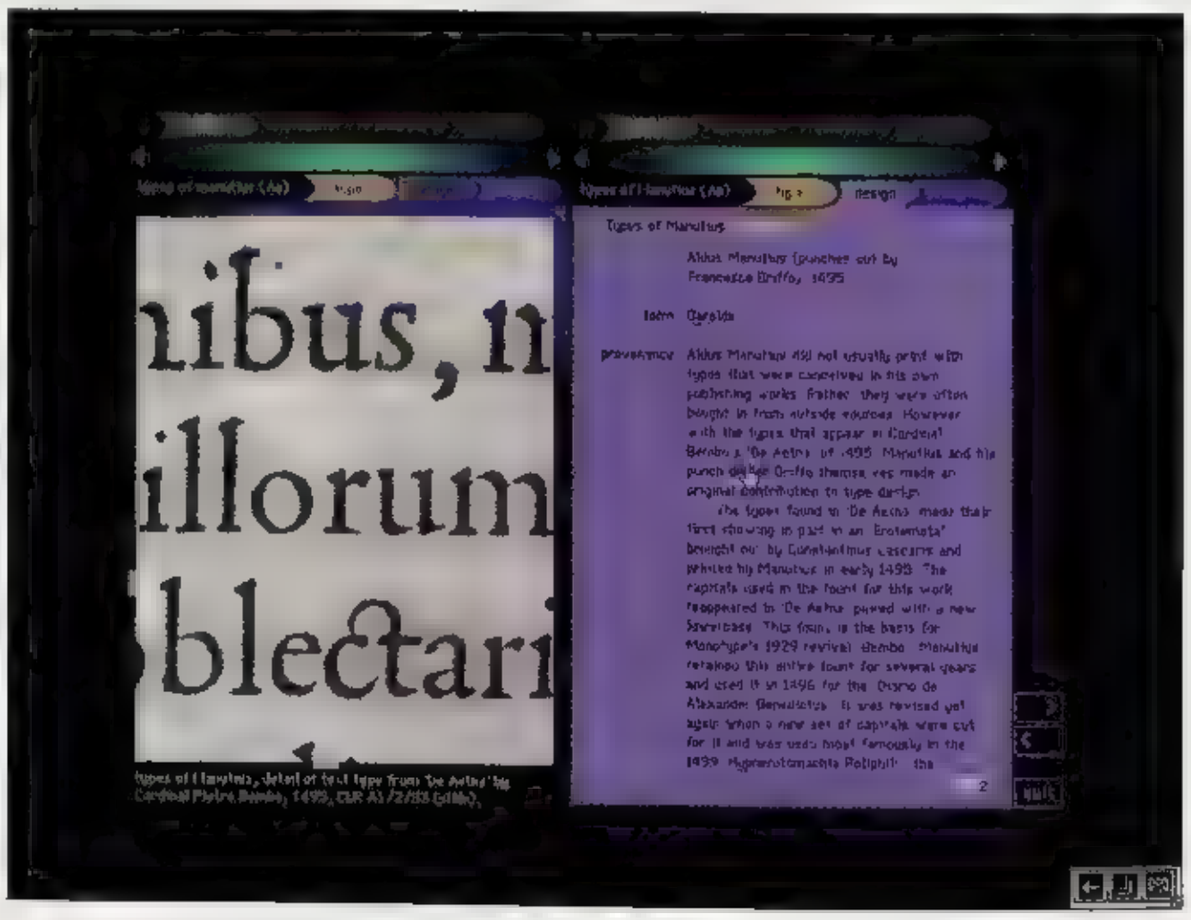
See page 56

Since typeface classification systems are rarely constructed with concern for the



The CD ROM contains more than 150 type "cards," each of which covers an individual design, and together represent the new classification proposal. Associated with each type card are two other cards. The first is a brief written treatment of the type's history (below). The second contains images from the Central Lettering Record archive showing the type design in type specimen and in everyday use (above)

Various screen dumps from the CD-ROM
Produced by Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design
Edited and designed by Eric Kindel
with Catherine Dixon



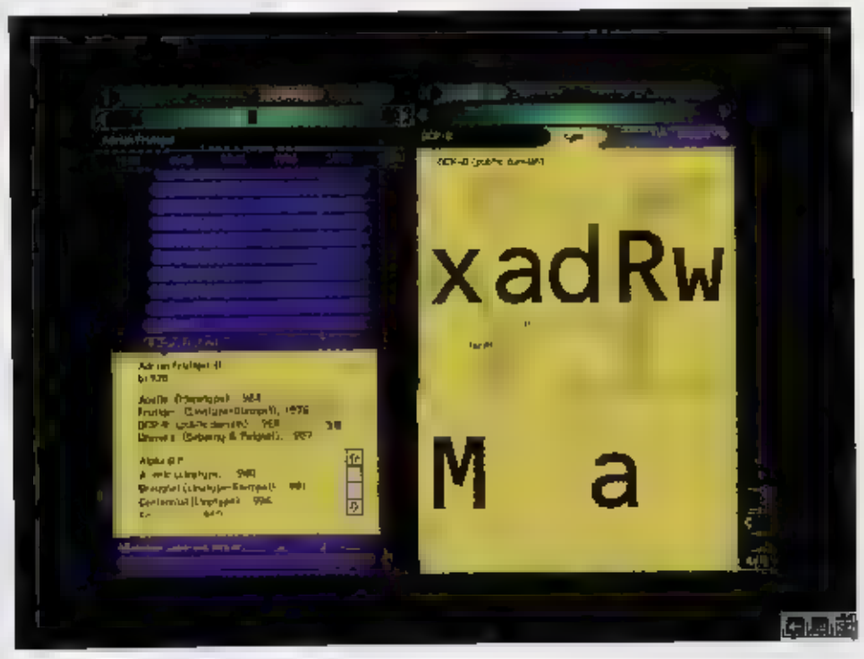


Images from the Central Lettering Record archive can be examined in detail through the use of selected close-ups

The main section of the interface offers the ability to call up eight types at once for close comparison.



Another section of the interface is a comprehensive timeline of significant type designers of the past 500 years (back to Gutenburg) and is a secondary menu system (by time rather than by name) for the types included



needs or interests of their users, let alone anticipating their level of sophistication, they rarely raise the question of who might benefit from their use. Mundie's *Field Guide to Type Classification*, for all its obscurity, is one of few systems that directly confronts the question of readership. Presenting his system as a field guide rather than a comprehensive taxonomy, Mundie makes a clear distinction between handbooks for beginners and reference works for the proficient. His botanical parallel is a good one: "[A] field guide is free to use categories such as 'pink flowers,' while the taxonomic botanist is apt to concentrate on whether the pistils are adnate to the perianth." The student learning to recognize typefaces undoubtedly has different concerns from those of the art director who is likely to be more interested in the stylistic and cultural references of a particular font, as well as its location in a catalog. The historian's interests are different still, as are those of the bibliographer, the cultural anthropologist, and the increasing number of nonprofessionals who have discovered an interest in type through their font menus.

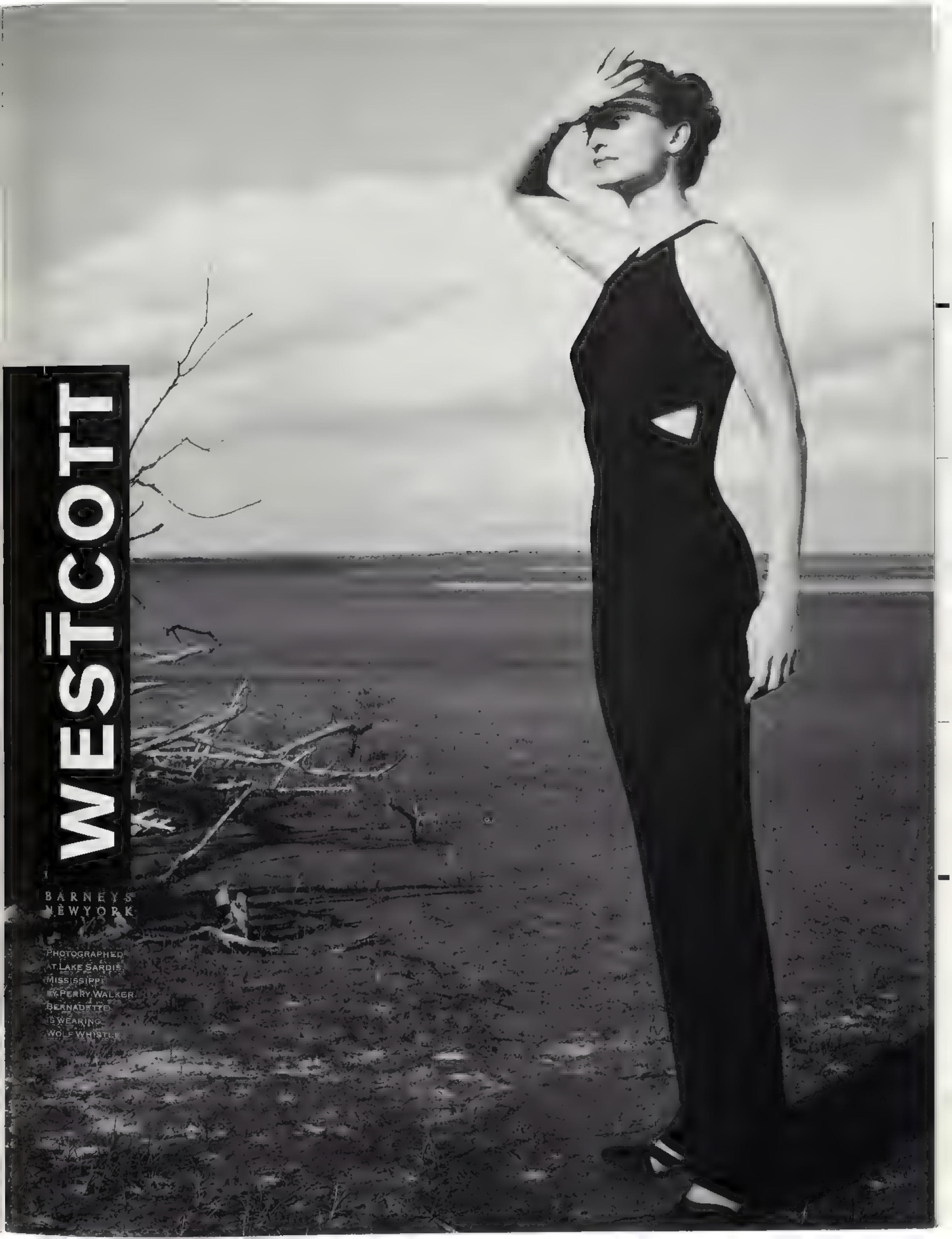
A New Reference

Questions about organization and audience amount to curatorship, an aspect of type classification that has never really been articulated. "Lettering is often interesting from many points of view," wrote Leonora Pearse about the Central Lettering Record, "so to make a classification according to one aspect of style may in fact prove more restricting than helpful." Mindful of the fact that classification systems inevitably leave an editorial imprint on the material they organize, the research group at Central Saint Martins has allowed their system to evolve with the understanding that when complete, it will serve as only one of many means for navigating the history of typography.

Although rooted in the archival resources of the Record, the CD-ROM has evolved in an atmosphere which strongly reflects the human resources of the college. Under the stewardship of Jesse Collins, Herbert Spencer, Anthony Froshaug and most recently, Phil Baines, the College has engendered an interest in typography, perhaps overshadowing the other lettering arts. Despite the CD's focus on printing types (especially those of the past fifteen years), it shares with the Record an approach to type history integrating the new and the old. "Our first thought," says editor/designer Eric Kindel, "was to provide the students with an overview that incorporates the familiar with the obscure, such as historical background material."

See page 64 and 65

The CD consists of four basic sections. The first is an electronic specimen book which contains more than 150 fonts (recorded as anti-aliased bitmaps) whose characters can each be fully displayed at enlarged scale and alongside the same


WESTCOTT
BARNEYS
NEW YORK
PHOTOGRAPHED
AT LAKE SARDIS
MISSISSIPPI
BY PERRY WALKER
BERNADETTE
IS WEARING
WOLF WHISTLE

characters in other typefaces (as many as eight at a time). In the second section, most of these faces are presented in the context of original use, i.e., in books and ephemera gathered from the Record. Included as high-resolution scans, these examples come from a variety of sources, including type specimen books and type foundries' promotional material, as well as posters and ephemera. A split-screen interface allows both sections to be viewed at once, thus a reader might examine Monotype Bembo alongside its historical progenitor, a type used by Aldus in the Renaissance novel *Hypnerotomachia Poliphilii,* which is shown as a striking enlargement. A third section contains historical synopses of all the typefaces included on the CD (provided as searchable text), and the fourth and most comprehensive section contains an elaborate timeline of type designers. The CD also offers various other materials, such as QuickTime animations (no CD is complete without them), which generally support the larger reference work.

The job of distilling half a millennium of type history down to 150 typefaces is an unwelcome task, but one that has been skillfully handled by Kindel and Dixon. Among the typefaces chosen are not only those which have enjoyed commercial success, but those which represent significant developments in technology. The technological front represented by Monotype Imprint (the first custom-designed typeface for machine composition) continues with Apollo, the first face explicitly designed for photo composition, and on to Adobe Minion, the first Multiple Master. Other aspects of the relationship between design and technology are introduced through the inclusion of machine-readable fonts such as OCR-A and OCR-B, and machine-inspired fonts such as Citizen and Beowolf. Still other typefaces are included as examples of different perspectives on a historical model, such as the three Bodoni revivals, the early Bauer Bodoni, the more recent ITC Bodoni, and the "bastardization," as Kindel puts it, Monotype Bodoni. Typefaces which are crucial to the discussion but remain unavailable digitally are illustrated in the first image section, such as the generous number of Garamond revivals which are shown as foundry specimens.

Unlike digital publications which are fundamentally books or educational films, the appeal of the Central Lettering Record CD is that it is presented not as a story, but as a database. Unlike conventional type histories in which typefaces are arranged chronologically, gathered stylistically, or merely listed alphabetically, the materials on the CD are not offered in linear order. The hypertext structure of the CD requires that the reader leap from font to font in pursuit of points of comparison, and the narrative about type history that emerges does so not on the screen but in the user's mind. "Our hope was to put in as much as possible," says Kindel, "and to allow the connections to form for themselves. There are certain ideas we're hoping to draw out—namely the context in which the types have evolved, the technology and

influences underlying them, what predecessors' types represent, and what they themselves were based on—but I'd argue that we ultimately take no opinion about the merits of the material included." This approach is less laissez-faire than it sounds, for included with the CD may be a series of scholarly essays that will refer to the material on the disc in different ways. These routes through a common terrain might be thought of as typographic travelogues, and their parity with the user's journey serves to remind that the hierarchies posited by any type history, and every type classification system, are highly subjective.

A New System

With the imperative to present contemporary and historical material in the same source, chief content researcher Catherine Dixon set about developing a classification system as a supplementary means of accessing the material on the CD-ROM. Since its conception, the system has undergone a number of changes, many of which are a response to the research team's own explorations of their CD, explorations which continue to suggest new ways of organizing material. Many of the original categories which reflected typefaces' formal qualities have been discarded in favor of more abstract terms which take into account their intentions. The *Industrial Vernacular* class, represented by Erik van Blokland's Trixie typeface, has since been absorbed into a new category, *Emulative*, which is less wedded to a particular fashion. "Categorizing Trixie as an 'Emulative' typeface suggests that it employs strategies that may have been tried before," says Dixon. "There are countless Letraset faces which are emulative—all those LCD types, for instance—but if you think about it, Gutenberg's type is really emulative, as well." The *Sampled* category has been similarly redefined, no longer referring only to typefaces made from other typefaces, but now encompassing designs that "take an aggressive stance towards history," as Dixon puts it. Whether it will be possible to uncouple *Sampled* from a larger cultural ethos has yet to be seen; like *Industrial Vernacular*, it connotes strong existing cultural and temporal associations. And the part of the project that involves determining conceptual underpinnings remains slippery, as Dixon is quick to point out: "It's a major trap, talking to designers about what they've done. The hype is largely after the fact."

The latest iteration of the system calls for a plane, formed by the intersection of a timeline on the one axis, and a list of identified typographic models on the other axis. Like Bringhurst's approach, typefaces are evaluated according to multiple criteria, but the CD's system takes a unique approach to how they are plotted on the grid. Historical sources might be represented by a single point on the grid—a foundry type made by William Caslon, for instance, might be at the intersection of

AD. 1732 and Garalde—but later designs that refer to historical material in different ways might be represented by a range encompassing a number of points, each of them a typographic reference. The corner of 1732 and Garalde might find itself a part of many neighborhoods, appearing in the profiles for not only explicit revivals like Adobe Caslon and Caslon No. 540, but more ironic interpretations like Mark Andresen's Not Caslon—and, even more unexpectedly, the Kennerley typeface which Frederic Goudy claimed as his homage to Caslon. The system becomes especially interesting when these sorts of unforeseen patterns emerge.

As the system continues to evolve, it threatens to become increasingly difficult to represent visually. Recent review suggests the need for a way of displaying non-visual references, which the team now hopes to incorporate as a listed appendix—time permitting, as the project's funding expires this summer. What happens then remains uncertain, but the team hopes to develop subsequent releases of the CD, some of which might be necessitated after the profession has had a chance to respond to the classification system. "In conversation with type designers," notes Dixon, "it has become clear that they aim for the cracks between categories within type design, combining elements of this with elements of that and so on." In spite of its flexibility and openness, perhaps this classification system is raising the bar, encouraging today's samplers and emulators to find new ways of hacking the system tomorrow. In addition to thriving on challenge, type designers are, to a person, smart alecks: the chance to have an entire category named after them in version 2.0 may prove irresistible.

Jonathan Hoefler is the director of *The Hoefler Type Foundry*, a design studio specializing in the development of typefaces in the Proto Hoeflerist style.

This article was set in Mrs Eaves, a typeface which can be found in the *Emigre Catalog* filed under M.

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Walking in the City

The terminal at N[illegible]ork's La Guardia seemed familiar enough, like most every other airport in the world. The same rituals of air travel accompanied by the constant din of CNN define the homogeneous experience of airports. The familiarity of airports, no matter where you are, helps ease the dislocation of being, suddenly, somewhere else. "*I can't believe we're here,*" I exclaimed to Laura and Jim, my traveling companions, which was not so much a comment on having survived the odds of an airplane crash or the 30 degree temperature drop, but rather it was a comment on that strange feeling of displacement I always have upon arrival, something akin to falling out of the sky and into another world.

by Andrew Blauvelt

The cab ride to Manhattan is always something of an adventure, its pace allowing an incremental, not abrupt entry into the city. The doorman at the Paramount punctuates our journey; finally we "have arrived." Leaving the cab, I enter that territory Fran Liebowitz so wittily called "the great outdoors" of New York – the space between the cab and the doorman. The frigid winter air confirms her urbane wisdom. A phalanx of male supermodels posing as bell boys polices the lobby and the sounds of a German tourist group fill the air. If design ever really made it to the museum the result might be the lobby of the Paramount. Philippe Starck's carefully controlled, excessively articulated design reaches everywhere and everything, from the stainless steel toilet paper dispensers to the drapey uniforms worn by the hotel staff. No object is spared, no person immune. In a strange inversion of consumerism it is the guests, and not the objects, who feel that they are on display.

This trip is a cultural excursion – a weekend of non-stop immersion into New York's number one tourism market: *ART*. I had planned this trip in order to visit the "Mixing Messages" exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, "*the second major museum exhibition presenting the varied activities of graphic designers.*" I felt compelled to see the show because I had visited the "*first major museum exhibition of graphic design,*" "Graphic Design in America: A Visual Language History" held at the Walker Art Center in 1989. The seven year gap between these shows indicates what rare phenomena exhibitions of graphic design are in the museum world. Like some exotic insect species that only occasionally ventures out from underground, museum-scale exhibitions of graphic design are few and far between, thereby demanding a pilgrimage from the faithful.
I believe.

Upon entering the exhibition, one is immediately confronted by the Great Hall of the Cooper-Hewitt.[1] Much of the dark wood that once covered the walls of the museum has disappeared, supplanted by a frosted Plexiglas wall. This new glowing wall is filling the space with the same kind of diffusive light as those backlit advertising panels that line the passageways of airports. A strange mix of messages greets me: Bloomingdales designer shopping bags that I remember from the late 80s, a Nike ad, "melons: $2.99," "WAC Is Watching You," among others. Down the hall I encounter several posters I had seen before but only in design magazines. They are wheat-pasted onto the walls, overlapping each other, simulating the effect of a pedestrian palimpsest – much like we encounter them on the streets in New York. More careful observation reveals the very considered nature of this presentation: each poster is given its chance to be on top rather than buried beneath the next urgent message. The reconstruction of an urban street in this most unlikely of uptown, historic locales, certainly partakes of surrealist exhibition tactics: the chance meeting of two unlikely things in the same place.

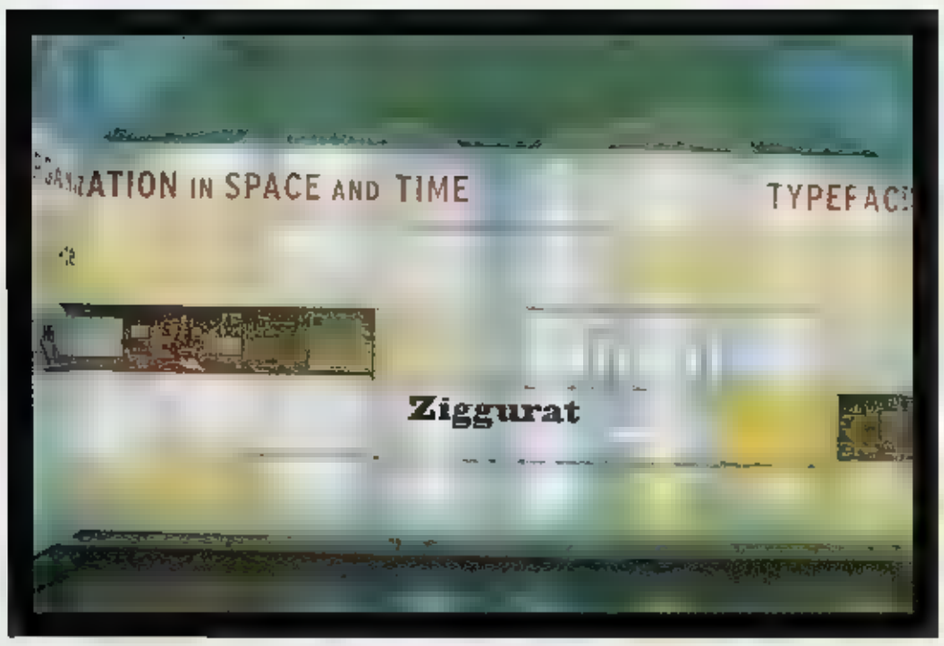


1

The Plexiglas skins and wheat pasted walls heighten the awareness of surface, reinforcing the idea of graphic design as packaging, its primary social function. There is something simultaneously genuine (natural) and deceptive (artificial) about this condition. Ironies erupt down the hallway: shopping bags on display in glass cases, the incision of the museum's gift shop entrance into the temporary Plexiglas facade, Mickey Mouse's ears and hands on an MGM Studios directional sign signaling (our?) exit. Unlike the exhibition at the Walker, which did not depart significantly from the modernist "white cube" approach, the Cooper-Hewitt took its cue from the tradition of the great trade expositions and natural history museums. The theatrical presentations of the trade show and the dioramas of the natural history museum inform the hybrid display tactic of *Mixing Messages*. The "natural environments" where graphic design might be found are recreated, out of place, simultaneously separating it from and situating it within reality. Whereas the wide white spaces of the Walker Art Center served to elevate the work of graphic design, severing it from its social context, at the Cooper-Hewitt the displays simulate the natural environment of graphic design, staging its appearance in order to heighten its cultural visibility.



2



3

Herbert Muschamp, architecture and design critic for the *New York Times*, described the exhibition as a "carnival of graphics."

> Certainly the theatrical exuberance of the Great-Hall-as-carnival-midway must have fed his impression. After all, I think this is the same man who once remarked that contemporary architecture could be eclipsed by the spectacle of the burning compound at Waco, Texas.

Mixing Messages stages its content not as a sideshow spectacle but as a theatrical performance, a masquerade. "Carnival" is an apt comparison. Traditionally, carnival occurs before Lent (a period of penitence) as a time of feasting and celebration. The custom of carnival is used for social regulation, a period when people can safely "let go." Carnival, in one sense, can be seen as a temporary exchange of social places; such as the interloping between rich and poor, for example. Carnival sanctions the transgression of "proper" social places and behavior.

Mixing Messages, too, attempts a transgression: it challenges the institutional conventions that frame it, those of the museum and the profession of graphic design. First, it raises questions of what the museum usually excludes: the street, the city, the life around it. Secondly, it purposefully conflates the various message spaces of the street, thereby equalizing the voices of otherwise unequal messengers. For example, local activist posters share the same place with global advertising campaigns. Furthermore, it embraces Design's "otherness" by including vernacular examples of graphic design against which the official, professionally-sanctioned version can be contrasted. Their presence in the same place accentuates the very distinctions between "professional" and "amateur."

These leveling tactics can be seen in the "Identity" room of the exhibition.[2] The focal point is a fifteen-foot-tall airplane tail emblazoned on one side with the Continental Airlines logo, that ubiquitous image of an abstracted globe that seems to sum up every corporation's image needs in the late 80s and early 90s. On the flip side of the tail is the new FedEx logo. The tail is surrounded by a series of T-shirts with logos, cryptic though oddly familiar graphic forms which prompt a double-take. Suddenly, issues of scale and power loom everywhere. The human scale of letterheads and T-shirts is dwarfed by the visual impact of "corporate identity." Ultimately, the visitors in the room become preoccupied by trying to guess the "original" identity of each T-shirt's logo. This ritual quickly becomes a double-edged lesson in popular culture. The recitation of "U-Haul" (U), "Mobil" (Mob), "Dunkin Donuts" (O.D.) can be heard in the gallery. But the same uneasiness comes over me as when I once heard a group of teenagers naming the titles of various TV shows – both old and new – by listening to just a few notes of the theme music. These T-shirts are a testament not to subversive counter-cultures, but to the equity of product branding and the power of corporations to maintain a ubiquitous presence in our consciousness.

It is the recurring feeling of familiarity and strangeness, a sense of displacement, that typifies my experience of *Mixing Messages*, particularly in the section of the exhibition devoted to typography. The visitor is beckoned into this "Font Room" by the intense glow emanating from the space.[3] The architecture of the room has been fashioned into something resembling a walk-in light table or, as the gallery guide describes it, "a giant computer screen." The layperson visiting this show would probably experience this room as utterly alien – a world of words that collectively mean little. For designers, however, this space is the most familiar: the names of typographers, typefaces, and various artifacts displaying their use line the room.

> Being in this room, enveloped by the glow, I am reminded of the display of designed artifacts at Moss, a trendy Soho store: plastic carts, lights, even a toilet seat, all arranged like specimens in bottom-lit glass cases. Moss uses the white cube gallery effect but mixes it with the latest in clinical chic. No longer simply lit from above, this new, sexy "glow" emanates as if from within and provides the same kind of fascination kids have when they put a flashlight in their mouths. It's the kind of light that makes things come alive.

Exiting the "Font Room," I find myself confronted by the words "Familiar/Modern," silkscreened overhead in large type, and a collection of works that might be described as a kind of graphic design avant-garde: early April Greiman posters, Ed Fella's "doodles," early M&Co album cover designs.

> Turning, I notice a small "window" in the exhibition wall. Through it I glimpse the mantle piece from the original room's fireplace. Again, I'm reminded of the strangeness of the exhibition's presence in Andrew Carnegie's former mansion. This window allows us – both visitor and curator – to glimpse the exhibitionary conceit together In the surrounding space, I notice openings in the free-standing wall panels that facilitate the comparative viewing of different objects, things both strange ("Modern") and familiar. Like observation points along the road, these openings provide viewers a specific vantage point with which to take in the scene

The exhibition surfaces have been steadily dissolving – from the opacity of layered wheat-pasted posters to the translucency of the Plexiglas "Font Room," to the openings in the walls. The conclusion is reached in the glass-walled conservatory where a large television monitor is playing a videotape. A group of visitors has gathered around the glow of the TV monitor, recounting their attendance (or not) of the films being shown or their recognition of the various songs in the music videos. Most visitors seem oblivious to the credits separating each clip and seem content to absorb the discrete segments as a bewildering, but somehow entertaining whole.

> The Walker exhibition was my first experience of graphic design work assuming a real presence in an art museum. So often graphic design on display looks lost, overwhelmed by the gallery space, or worse, hopelessly out of place, out of context. Finally, I thought someone had figured out how to frame graphic design. (I meant that both literally and metaphorically.) The exhibition devices that modern art had evolved – what we now call the "white cube gallery" – worked its decontextualizing magic on graphic design. And not just with the posters, mind you, but with all sorts of things which are difficult to show, such as magazines, books, packaging, etc. In the context of the Walker's galleries graphic design looked as if it "had arrived." The expanses of white space paradoxically served to isolate (to remove from everyday life) and unify the disparate objects. In traditional aesthetic theory, "true" appreciation of a work of art requires a distancing from it, a certain kind of emotional detachment. This aesthetic distancing is usually contrasted with the kind of empathetic embrace that viewers lend to various forms of popular culture. At the Walker exhibition, the requisite "aesthetic distancing" from the work had taken place and I, as a viewer, could appreciate, even if it was at a distance. It was only upon encountering the many books on display – spreads held open in glass vitrines – that I felt compelled to touch, to participate. At that moment, the display tactics of the white cube revealed themselves and I had violated the unwritten, unspoken contract as a viewer.

The last segment of the *Mixing Messages* show includes the "Publishing" section of the exhibition. In what appears to be an anteroom to a library, a grid of cubbyholes ascends the walls, each compartment containing a different book jacket. Long strings of tiny, white Christmas lights frame the artifacts, creating a kitsch, alterlike effect. An elegy for print or celebration of its second coming? Inside Andrew Carnegie's former library, a long double-sided case, suspiciously like a compositor's desk, contains a series of books which are securely held in place but otherwise free to the viewer who wished to turn the pages. Around the perimeter of the room are several display cases with more books and a collection of fanzines, which feel like exotic specimens or curiosities, seeming almost "primitive" compared to the high-end production values of the professional work that surrounds it. The backlit Plexiglas again is used to display pages from magazines like *Harper's Bazaar* and *Ray Gun*. Like an x-ray, the pages on display reveal an uncanny series of alignments between Fabian Baron's large-scale letterforms on the recto side that frame the bodies of fashion models on the verso side in dramatic ways; the pages from *Ray Gun* yielding an even denser miasma of typographic forms. (A video image of blue static is projected onto the wall, no doubt intended to be the on-line portion of the publishing examples. I tried to activate it, but, unfortunately, I was unable. Somehow this seemed okay. My thoughts turned to a previous excursion to one of those mega-bookstores — Borders, Barnes & Noble, B. Dalton's I couldn't recall which. It really didn't matter. If print was dead, no one told these bookstores. Even Bruce Mau's tome, *S,M,L,XL*, simply pales in the face of the spectacle created by these megastores. Even in the face of spectacular consumerism, print endures because its "consumption" is still perceived as a private, intellectual exchange between an individual reader and a text, rather than a public, monetary exchange between customers and corporations.

After leaving the exhibition I make my way down Fifth Avenue and enter the Guggenheim Museum. The Ellsworth Kelly show is being deinstalled, and the quietness of the space has given way to the sound of drills, dollies and worker's instructions. I've traveled only a few blocks but it is light years away from the Cooper-Hewitt. Frank Lloyd Wright's spiraling ramps immediately make the visitor aware of their ambulatory role as a museum spectator. It is said that the white cube gallery space developed out of the need to show precisely this kind of work: large-scale canvases of often unique shapes whose subject matter was no longer a "window on the world" but a window onto the canvas — painting as painting. As I descend the Guggenheim I can't help but think that the art in this space is a cul-de-sac, a cultural dead-end. But is it the art or the space? The artist Daniel Buren once wrote that the Guggenheim was "like an overbearing mother to the art it houses." For Buren, Wright's design certainly a significant departure at the time for art museums — stages the display of its art with a protective gesture, its space a smothering envelope.

(Continued on next page)

The Cooper-Hewitt and the Guggenheim are only two of several institutions that form Museum Mile along Fifth Avenue, so I continue my detour through culture. At the Met's Christian Dior show, I encounter an intense spectacle. Hundreds of visitors are inching their way in a single line, snaking through the galleries, around the costume displays. Inverting the dynamics of the fashion show, it was the serpentine crowd that was performing while faceless mannequins posed stationary behind glass walls. Filing past the exhibits was akin to witnessing the evolution of Dior's couture. Walking became reading and reliving. A group of fashionable women – I pegged them from the Upper East Side – preceded me in line. I listened to their recollections of the fashions that were inseparable from both their personal lives and a larger public history; Grace Kelly's outfits before she became a princess, Jackie O's ensembles before JFK's death, and, of course, Eva Peron's "national costumes" before Madonna. I wondered whether graphic design would ever be read in this way, so transparently, so effortlessly, by the public. How was the story of graphic design unfolding its narrative, I wondered?)

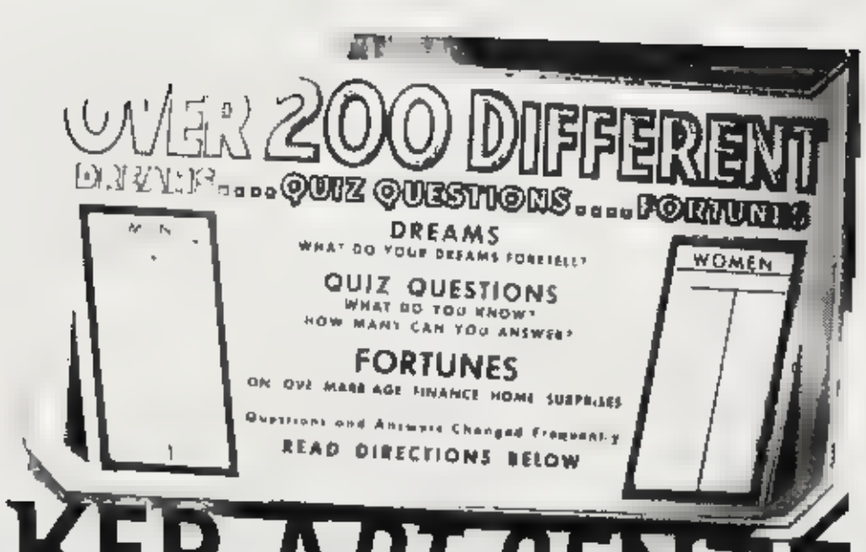
Mixing Messages
Exhibition design Kennedy + Violich Architecture
Curator: Ellen Lupton
Graphic design: Ellen Lupton, Jen Roos
Graphic Design, Font Room Frederick Gates
Photos Bill Jacobson

DESPITE THE OBVIOUS DIFFERENCES IN THE DISPLAY TACTICS BETWEEN THE EXHIBITIONS AT THE WALKER AND THE COOPER-HEWITT, THE NARRATIVE STRUCTURES ARE LARGELY THE SAME. BOTH SHOWS ESCHEWED THE FOCUS ON ANY PARTICULAR DESIGNER, CHOOSING INSTEAD TO LET THE FUNCTIONS AND USES OF GRAPHIC DESIGN DICTATE THE CHOICES AND GROUPINGS: WHETHER "PUBLISHING" AND "IDENTITY," OR "DESIGN IN THE ENVIRONMENT" AND "DESIGN FOR COMMERCE." THE MAJOR AND CENTRAL DIFFERENCE WAS THE COOPER-HEWITT'S CHOICE TO INCLUDE WORK PRODUCED BY THOSE NORMALLY OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF PROFESSIONAL DESIGN'S OFFICIAL CULTURE. AND IT IS THIS DIFFERENCE THAT SURELY MARKS THE TIME BETWEEN BOTH SHOWS. THE VERNACULAR MIGHT HAVE BEEN A QUAINT, IRONIC REFERENCE IN THE 80S, SOMETHING THAT WOULD HAVE APPEARED ONLY TO MARK THE EVOLUTION OF THE PROFESSION. BUT IN THE 90S THIS DISTANCE IS DISSOLVED AS "DESIGNERS" DELVE DEEPER INTO THE REPERTOIRE OF THE UNSCHOOLED, WHILE "DESIGNERS" MIME THE CONVENTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL WORK WHICH IS INDELIBLY WRITTEN ON THE PUBLIC LANDSCAPE IN A WAY ONLY BIG MEDIA MONEY CAN BUY. GRAPHIC DESIGN LIVES NOT ON A TWO-WAY STREET CONNECTING HIGH AND LOW, BUT ON A CONGESTED HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE, CIRCULATING IN EVERY WHICH WAY THROUGH THE BODY POLITIC.

AT THE END of a very long day, I head back to the Paramount, and as those oh-so-heavy glass doors close behind me, the intensity of contrasts in the design of the world become obvious. The totally designed environment of the hotel acts as a foil to the social realities of the world outside. And isn't this the basis of fantasy? Just as I am confident that this difference between design worlds is what makes Design visible and important, I recall the words of my friend Austin: *"It's just amazing that every fuckin' thing in the world had to be designed by someone and even more amazing that some had to want it and buy it."*
I might add, *"and exhibit it."*

END

Andrew Blauvelt is the Director of Graduate Studies in Graphic Design at North Carolina State University

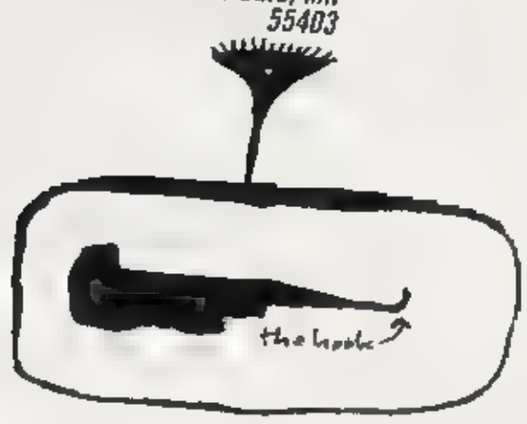


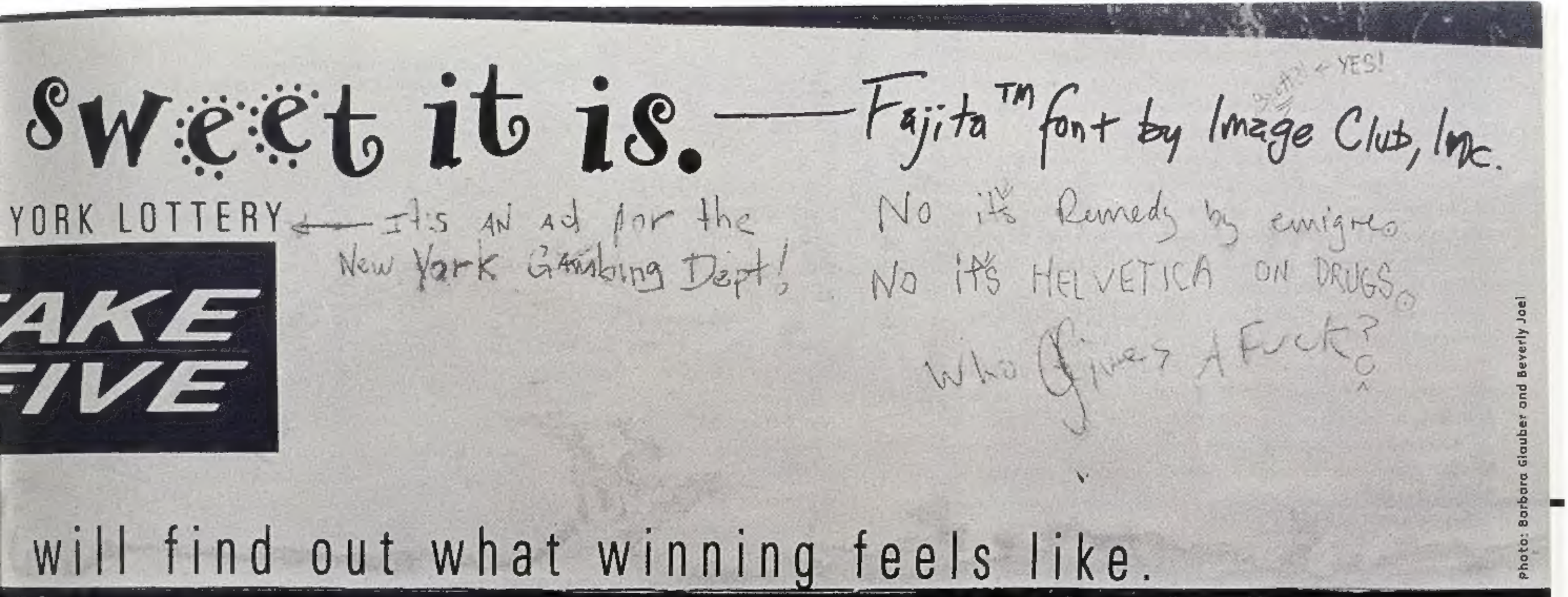
WALKER ART CENTER INTERNSHIP 1997–1998

THE INTERNSHIP IS A ONE-YEAR, FULL-TIME POSITION IN THE DESIGN DEPARTMENT (SEPTEMBER 1, 1997 – AUGUST 31, 1998). THE INTERN WILL ASSIST IN DESIGNING EXHIBITION PUBLICATIONS AND EPHEMERA FOR THE WALKER'S DANCE, MUSIC, FILM, VISUAL ARTS, AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS. MUST HAVE EXCELLENT TYPOGRAPHIC SKILLS. INDIVIDUALS WITH A BFA OR AN MFA DEGREE IN DESIGN ARE INVITED TO APPLY BY JULY 1, 1997. A SALARY OF $18,500 AND FULL BENEFITS WILL BE OFFERED. AA/EOE/W/M/H

PLEASE SUBMIT BY JULY 1, 1997: A LETTER OF INTEREST, RESUME, THREE REFERENCES, 12 SLIDES AND/OR SAMPLES OF PRINTED OR ELECTRONIC MATTER, AND A SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE FOR THE RETURN OF YOUR MATERIALS TO:

HUMAN RESOURCES
WALKER ART CENTER
VINELAND PLACE
MINNEAPOLIS, MN
55403





Seen

Top: Public discourse regarding origins of Frank Heine's Remedy typeface on a billboard in the New York subway.
Bottom: Remedy inspired, handpainted sign on a coffeeshop in San Francisco.



Mail

Vent, respond, comment or criticize:
Snail Mail: 4475 D Street, Sacramento, CA 95819
Fax: (916) 451 4351
Email: editor@emigre.com

Dear Emigre, I've always loved *Emigre* – always have, always will. So I was really excited when I got the notice that the next issue was going to be about magazines. Yes! And that you were including my all-time favorites (*Creem* and *WET*). Really yes! (Or, yes Ultra Extended Bold!)

Then I got the issue and read it eagerly – for awhile at least – until I slowly realized . . . it was . . . it was crap (the writing that is, even yours). I mean, Rudy, no one in that issue could write their way out of a paper bag (another San Francisco cult magazine from the late 1960s). Now, when I want to hear sad-sack, weepy boomer postmortem life story blah, blah, I'll buy the autobios or visit the home pages of the writers.

But please, please, PLEASE, don't pass this crap off as writing about magazines (and great ones all, to boot).

I mean, here's the punch line: if you want *Emigre* to be something people read instead of just look at, then you've got to publish writing worth reading. And damn little in *Emigre* no. 41 is.

I don't mean to be so cranky and hostile but it's just that I love all these magazines and love *Emigre* so much . . . and you got my hopes up and they were just dashed, that's all.

Bill Gubbins, Knoxville, TN

P.S.: One last thing. There's no one who thinks that Norman Pearlstine is the editor of *People*. The editor (managing editor in Time Inc. parlance) of *People* is Lany Jones. Pearlstine is his boss and has little (if anything) to do with the day-to-day quality of *People*.

Dear Emigre, I just received #41 and I wanted to send a big THANK YOU for doing such an amazing issue. Amazing because I could relate so strongly to the material presented by your five chosen candidates – and not just in an intellectual or theoretical manner but also on an emotional, intuitive level.

I was reminded that it was initially your magazine that inspired me to choose design as a future career – although I had no idea what it was called exactly, at the time. I was only 11. I was inspired from the minute I saw the cover of *Emigre* no. 4: I'll never forget when I first realized that it was possible to do these sorts of things, to put together a magazine that connected with so many people, so diverse in their viewpoints and creative processes. A spread from #4, carefully removed of its staples, was taped to my bedroom wall for the next five years! The emotional impact of seeing this has stayed with me ever since, for fifteen years thus far.

Emigre no. 41 reminded me all over again that design isn't just about mechanicals, theorizing, or difficult clients. It's about life. And magazines reflect this life using design as action, in its most potent form.

You can see the movement of design on a printed page: it's what's happening at that specific moment in time. Magazines reveal volumes about humanity, where we are and where we're going – or not going. And the best magazines are the ones that ineffably reveal all this to us at once.

Marilyn Devedjiev, New York, NY

Dear Emigre, I recently purchased a book for my dictionary collection called *A Dictionary of Euphemisms & Other Doubletalk* by Hugh Rawson (Crown Publishers, 1981). In the introduction, the author provides a formula for something called the Fog of Pomposity Index: "The FOP index compares the length of the euphemism or circumlocution to the word or phrase for which it stands, with an additional point added for each additional letter, syllable or word in the substitute expression. Thus 'medicine' has 8 letters and 3 syllables, while 'medication' has 10 letters and an extra, fourth syllable, giving it a point count of 11. Dividing 8 into 11 produces a FOP index of 1.4."

If we take Massimo Vignelli's statement, quoted in *Emigre* no. 40, that he is no longer a "graphic designer" (15 letters) but rather an "information architect" (20 letters + 2 extra syllables) we get a FOP index of about 1.47. However, if we take "design a page" (11 letters) and compare it to "organize information in a way that is essentially retrievable, understandable, visually captivating, emotionally involving, and easily identifiable" (131 letters, 46 extra syllables, 13 extra words) the FOP Index jumps to 17.27.

Now that's impressive.

Dan Howland, Editor, The Journal of Ride Theory, OR

Dear Emigre, I've finally decided to write you a few comments because I'd like to say something about that letter in *Emigre* no. 41 by Sean DeYoe. Actually, my comments are also a bit related to another letter in the same issue by Tal Leming – you know, the guy with all the Gen X modesty about being dumb. (Very Kurt Cobain.)

Anyway, what I want to say is that Mr. DeYoe has completely missed the point about *Emigre* and car/truck magazines. He suggests that you "include a warning label on any future issues with 'confusing' covers." Well, if what happened to him really happened, then *Emigre* is bigger and better than I realized. What I'm trying to say is that through experimentation with design, in this case *Emigre*'s laudable "embezzlement of convention," *Emigre* has managed to disrupt an ideological order. You know the kind I mean: "Truck magazines here; women's magazine here; *Playboy* there; oh yes, I nearly forgot, nerdy design magazines down here." Truck drivers aren't supposed to read *Emigre* and designers aren't supposed to be scrounging the rack for the latest *Hot Rod Whatever*. So, in the case of Mr. DeYoe ("Hey, call me Sean," I can hear him saying) – okay, so in the case of Sean's experience, visual order was maintained by the shop owner but an ideological order was compromised and people's behaviour changed by *Emigre*.

In other words, prescribed and imposed order suffered and all because of graphic design!

Please don't add any warnings to future "confusing" covers. Interrupt the habitual! Applaud the odd! God knows, we need it.

Sincerely yours

Eddie West, Internet

Dear Emigre, Down here, down under, we're just drifting from summer to autumn. This morning it was hot and sunny. Then a thunderstorm rolled in with a downpour for the sleepy suburbs of Perth. Wet.

Then the sun returned, the dogs barked, and the postman approached on his 50cc Kawasaki. Low and behold, the Emigre 97 Catalog, dressed for the rain in its protective plastic cover hiding a sunny Sacramento vista underneath.

Congrats to all. It looks great!

John Buck, Perth, Australia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New font collective targets U.S. law

PHILADELPHIA, 24 March 1997 – A diverse collective of type designers and specialists has formed an advocacy group determined to win copyright protection for font designs in the United States.

***TypeRight* is an independent organization devoted to educating and informing the public about why copyright is needed for fonts and encouraging members of the digital design community to urge their Congressional representatives to amend U.S. law to protect typeface designs. Central to this effort is TypeRight's website, at**

http://www.typeright.org

TypeRight emerged from e-mail discussions among an international group of designers, founders, and other type experts who are fed up with seeing font creations copied in ways they maintain are unethical. In most western countries, in fact, such copying is considered illegal, yet it continues in the U.S. unchecked.

While the United States claims to be a world leader in intellectual property protections, TypeRight's members believe font designers are being short-changed by an outdated determination that the design aspect of type fonts cannot be subject to copyright. Digital tools, they argue – while making innovative type design commercially viable – have also made it easier to infringe.

TypeRight's members believe current protections that focus on font software are insufficient. While the software code itself can be copyrighted, they note, there's still a widespread practice of taking original font designs by digital means and re-releasing them with little or no change under new names. Many of TypeRight's members, like others in the type design industry, have had this happen to their work. It is a state of affairs that has them newly dismayed at the shortcomings of U.S. law.

TypeRight's express goal is to change the way the U.S. Copyright Act is interpreted to include protection for font designs.



These original typefaces by Jonathan Hoefler are now available, *exclusively* from The Hoefler Type Foundry.

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To receive a copy, call

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tel 212 777 6640 *fax* 212 777 6684
info@typography.com · WWW.TYPOGRAPHY.COM



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